#### HISTORY

OF THE

#### AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

BY DAVID RAMSAY, M.D.

OF SOUTH-CAROLINA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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#### HISTOR.Y

#### AMBRICAN REVOLUTION.



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TOUTED FOR WHILLAND JONES, NO. 26, LAME-STREET.

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### The discovery of the disress which the Ame-

ricans fuffered at the close of the war, must not lead us to lament the peace which followed;

## ENGLISH FRIEND,

ment to fulljugate America, chiler terfos mult have then granted to her equivalent to independence, or elless perpetual cause of war would

have a manaed; which in she cafe of a THE particulars of the American Revolu-L tion may by many be thought to be fufficiently known; but, if we deduct from our first accounts all that was falle, or that is by this time forgotten, and add all that is true which has fince been discovered, the history, now presented to the English reader, may be esteemed in a great meafure new. It is new even among the Americans. and in any event it must produce a new effect upon the judgment and feelings of every one, as being digested out of scattered materials. There are few, indeed, to whom the work will be more interesting than to those who have borne a share in the events which it records; and there is no portion of modern, or perhaps antient, history, more worthy of the attention of readers at large, whether as respecting politics, war, or the human character, be and el chelt la elest he blued Coment - Sout Accoloration of flyle will

Should the perusal of it revive some of the regrets of Englishmen, the contemplation of our past misfortunes may at least prove a lesson for avoiding the like in future; especially in the present eventful age, when no political course can long be safe which is not framed upon principle, and suited both to the temper and interests of mankind.

The discovery of the distress which the Americans suffered at the close of the war, must not lead us to lament the peace which followed; for the distress experienced was certainly mutual. But had it even been in our power for the moment to subjugate America, either terms must have been granted to her equivalent to independence, or else a perpetual cause of war would have remained; which in the case of a spirited and increasing people, must always have proved burthensome on our side, and sooner or later have terminated in their favor. At present, none can doubt, that a more beneficial connection with America is open to us, than any which could have been procured by force.

The particular history before us, is at once short and full, as well as judicious, authentic, and impartial, and is clearly the best extant on the

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Some allowances nevertheless are requisite in favor of the present work, which from several passages in it, appears not to have received the author's last corrections. Various inaccuracies also, especially in the first volume, have crept into it, from errors either of the transcriber or of the press. A table of these is formed wherever they are of moment.—Some peculiarities of style will still

still be found remaining, a part of which belong to the author, and the rest to the country to which he belongs.

It is a curious fact, that there is perhaps no one portion of the British empire, in which two or three millions of persons are to be found, who freak their mother-tongue with greater purity, or a truer pronunciation, than the white inhabitants of the United States. This was attributed. by a penetrating observer, to the number of British subjects assembled in America from various quarters, who in consequence of their intercourse and intermarriages, foon dropped the peculiarities of their feveral provincial idioms, retaining only what was fundamental and common to them all; a process, which the frequency or rather the univerfality of school-learning in North-America must naturally have affisted .- At the same time there are few natives of the United States, who are altogether free from what may be called Americanisms, both in their speech and their writing. In the case of words of rarer use, they have framed their own models of pronunciation, as having little access to those established among the people from whom they have derived their language; and hence they are fometimes at variance with us in their speech, (to say nothing of the peculiar tones of voice which prevail in some parts of the United States.) But their familiarity with our best writers has in general left them ignorant of nothing which regards our phraseology; and hence their chief difference in writing confifts in their having added a few words to our language, in consequence of the influence of fome local authority or of their peculiar fituation. Some of these additions we have ourselves received A 3

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ceived, as in the case of the words "organize and organization," when applied to political bodies; others we have liftened to without as vet adopting, as in the case of the words "the legislative and the executive," when used as substantives; but others again we have altogether declined to countenance, as the words, "to advocate and to loan," which appear to be verbs invented without any apparent reason. The author before us will furnish feveral examples of what is here alluded to, where the folitary author rity of a few English writers, if suchare to be found in his fayour, cannot be confidered as of force enough to be opposed to the general habit of our nation.—Happily, however, these criticisms are of little practical use; for no terms can become current in either of the two countries, which will not eafily be understood in both of them.-It is thus that the new circumstances of the French have brought various words into use with that nation, which were before unknown to it; but they are all of them immediately intelligible, whether they are borrowed from us, or! from America, or, like the words " civifme and incivisme," have originated among themselves.

On the whole, the western world will have possessed no language so uniform and so universal as our own is likely to be, when the British Americans shall once have peopled their new continent, which is so much more extensive than that of Europe. Before the late American revolution, the English language had acquired its standard, (as far as any living language can acquire a standard,) and the British colonists had attained a remarkable perfection in it; and consequently there is no probability that any dialect can hereafter arise on either side, such as was common

common in barbarous ages.—Englishmen then have reason to be proud of the means of communication thus offered, for benefiting upon easy, terms, fo large a portion of the human race; nor will they, it is to be hoped, defpife the opportunity of receiving benefit in return; for, it is impossible that a people descended from some of the best stocks in Europe, and engaged in useful pursuits, can fail to furnish new ideas and new discoveries, like those of which the immortal Franklin has given us fo many examples.-Perhaps we may look to the time when the English and French languages shall become the learned languages of all civilized nations; and, unless with a few necessary exceptions, shall supersede the use of the dead languages, which are at prefent so imperfectly understood by those interested in possessing them as a vehicle of real knowledge.

It may be proper here to inform the public, that our author was born in America, and is connected by his fecond marriage with the family of the well known Mr. Laurens .- His history of the revolution of the North American States is preceded by a short epitome of their colonization, and followed by the relation of feveral incidents which have occurred in them fince the peace. Had the author continued, his accounts a year or two later, he might have feen reason to augur favourably of his country, whose prospects have recently improved—in confequence of the univerfal obedience paid to the new fœderal government, the funding of all the American public debts, a fystem of simple and productive taxes, the commencing operation of law, a complete restoration of tranquillity, a gradual reformation A 4 hoped hoped for in manners, the rapid improvement of agriculture and arts, and the dawn of confidence opening on the part of foreign powers, who had feen too little cause to respect the proceedings (whether public or private) which for some years past have unhappily prevailed in the United States.

expossible teast a people descended from some of the best slocks at a newper, and energed in assistant pursuits, can full to furnish new ideas and new alloweries, like a note of which are immortally anklin has given us so many examples—Perland we may look to the teast in the English and French languages shall be the the learner languages of all civilized nations; and, and will a few new careful antiques; and are the results of the conditions of the conditions of the conditions of the conditions are there is a shall unperform the solutions of the conditions of the

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THE materials for the following sheets were collected in the years 1782, 1783, 1785, and 1786; in which years, as a member of Congress, I had access to all the official papers of the United States. Every letter written to Congress by General Washington, from the day he took the command of the American army till he refigned it, was carefully perused, and its contents noted. The fame was done with the letters of other general officers, ministers of Congress, and others in public stations. It was intended to have enlarged the work by the infertion of state papers, as proofs and illustrations of my positions. This I could easily have done, and shall do at a future time, and in a separate work, if the public require it. At present I thought it prudent to publish little more than a simple narrative of events, without introducing my authorities. Several of these are already in my History of the Revolution of South-Carolina, and fuch as are printed may be found in the periodical publications of the day. I have endeavoured to give much original matter at a fmall expence. As I write about recent events, known to thousands as well as myself, proofs are at present less necessary than they will be in future.

I appeal to the actors in the great scenes which I have described for the substantial truth of my narrative. Intentional misrepresentations, I am sure there are none. If there are any from other sources, I trust they will be found in small

circumstance, not affecting the substance.

October 20, 1789.

P R B F A C B

THE manufall for the following theris were Let collected by the yearst toom if assist tyles. end depote in which yourse as a member of Congreek, I had accels to all the official papers of the United Space. Every letter written to Conrese by General Washington, from the day he reals the community of the American army tell he roughed it, was carefully peruled, and its concollected. The fame was cone with the letto a or other general officers, ramidars of Conrefer and others in public ferrious. It was intended to have calanged the week by the inferon of flate payers, as proofs and illustrations of my politions, This I could carly have done, and thall do at a viewe time, and in a feparate work, if the public require it. At prefent I throught it prodent to publish Acid more than a imple marrative of exents, without introducing my authorities. Several of their are already in my Hylory of the Association of South Carolina, and fuch as are printed may be found in the periodical publications of the day. I have endeavoured to give innoh original matter at a fmall expence. As I write about recent events. largern to though the well as mylelf, proofs are at prefent lets necessary than they will be in future. . A appeal to the adders in the great feenes which I have deferred for the hibitential truth of upy narrative. Intentional mili opreferrations. lam fare there are none. If there are any from other fourdes. I can't they will be found in finall

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#### AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

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Of the Settlement of the English Colonies, and of the poli-

ples on which a right to foil bus been founded, there is

THE extensive continent which is now called A-I merica, was three hundred years ago unknown to three quarters of the globe. The efforts of Europe during the fifteenth century to find a new path to the rich countries of the East, brought on the discovery of a new world in the West. Christopher Columbus acquired this diffinguished honor in the year 1492, but a later navigator Americus Vespucius who had been employed to draw maps of the new discoveries, robbed him of the credit he justly merited of having the country called by his name. In the following year 1493. Pope Alexander the fixth, with a munificence that cost him nothing, gave the whole Continent to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. This grant was not because the country was uninhabited, but because the nations existing there were infidels; and therefore in the opinion of the infallible donor not entitled to the possession of the territory in which their Creator had placed them. This extravagant claim of a right to dispose of the countries of heathen nations, was too abfurd to be univerfally regarded, even in that superfittious age. And in defiance of it, several European lovereigns though devoted to the See of Rome undertook and fuccessfully profecuted further discoveries in the Weltern hemisphere and ment yet and a company or to

Henry the feventh of England, by the exertion of an authority fimilar to that of Pope Alexander, granted to John Cabot and his three fons a commission, " to navigate all parts of the ocean for the purpose of discovering Islands, Countries, Regions or Provinces, either of Vol. I.

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Gentiles

1492.

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1496.

Gentiles or Infidels, which have been hitherto unknown to all Christian people, with power to set up his standard and to take possession of the same as Vassals of the crown of England." By virtue of this commission, Sebastian Cabot explored and took possession of a great part of the North American continent, in the name and on behalf of the king of England.

1498.

The country thus discovered by Cabot was possessed by numerous tribes or nations of people. As these had been till then unknown to all other Princes or States, they could not possibly have owed their allegiance or fubjection to any foreign power on earth; they must have therefore been independent communities, and as fucle capable of acquiring territorial property, in the fame manner as other nations. Of the various principles on which a right to foil has been founded, there is none superior to immemorial occupancy. From what time the Aborigines of America had refided therein, or from what place they migrated thither, were questions of doubtful folution, but it was certain that they had long been fole occupants of the country. In this state no European prince could derive a title to the foil from difcovery, because that can give a right only to lands and things which either have never been owned or possessed, or which after being owned or possessed have been voluntarily deferted. The right of the Indian nations to the foil in their possession was founded in nature. It was the free and liberal gift of Heaven to them, and fuch as no foreigner could rightfully annul. The blinded superstition of the times regarded the Deity as the partial God of Christians, and not as the common father of faints and favages. The pervading influence of philosophy, reason and truth, has fince that period, given us better notions of the rights of mankind, and of the obligations of morality. These unquestionably are not confined to particular modes of faith, but extend univerfally to Jews and Gentiles, to Christians and Infidels.

Unfounded however as the claims of European fovereigns to American territories were, they severally proceeded to act upon them. By tacit consent they adopted as a new law of nations, that the countries which each explored should be the absolute property of the discoverer. While they thus sported with the rights of unoffending nations, they could not agree in their respective shares of the common spoil. The Portuguese and Spaniards, instanced by

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the same spirit of national aggrandizement, contended for the exclusive sovereignty of what Columbus had explored. Animated by the rancour of commercial jealoufy, the Dutch and Portuguele fought for the Brazils. Contrary to her genuine interests, England commenced a war in order that her contraband traders on the Mexican coast claimed by the king of Spain might no longer be fearched. No farther back than the middle of the prefent century, a contest concerning boundaries of American territory belonging to neither, occasioned a long and bloody war

between France and England.

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Though Queen Elizabeth and James the first denied the authority of the Pope of Rome to give away the country of Infidels; yet they fo far adopted the fanciful diffinction between the rights of heathens and the rights of christians, as to make it the foundation of their respective grants. They freely gave away what did not belong to them, with no other proviso, than that " the territories and districts so granted, be not previously occupied and poffeffed by the subjects of any other christian prince or flate." The first English patent which was given for the purpose of colonising the country discovered by the Cabots, was granted by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Hum- 1578. pary Gilbert, but this proved abortive. Soon after the licenfed Walter Raleigh, " to fearch for heathen lands not inhabited by christian people," and granted to him in fee all the foil "within 200 leagues of the places where his people fhould make their dwellings and abidings." Under his aufpices an inconfiderable colony took poflession of a part of the American coast, which now forms North Carolina. In honour of the Virgin Queen his fovereign, he gave to the whole country the name of Virginia. These first settlers and several others who followed them, were either deftroyed by the natives, removed by fucceeding navigators, or died without leaving any behind to tell their melancholy story, for they were never more heard of. No permanent settlement was efteded till the reign of James the first. The national arder which forung from the long and vigorous adminiftration of Queen Elizabeth, continued to produce its eftects for some time after the had ceased to animate the whole. Her fuccessor though of an indolent disposition, potteffed a laudable genius for colonitation. Naturally fond of novelty, he was much pleased with a proposal made to him by some of the projectors of that age " for deducing

1606:

deducing a colony into that part of America commonly called Virginia." He therefore granted letters patent to Thomas Gates and his affociates, by which he conferred on them " all those territories in America, which were not then possessed by other christian princes or people, and which lay between the 34th and 45th degree of north latitude." They were divided into two companies, the first consisting of adventurers of the city of London, was called the London company, the fecond confifting of merchants of Plymouth and fome other Western towns, was called the Plymouth company. The adventurers were empowered to transport thither as many English subjects as should willingly accompany them; and it was declared that the colonists and their children should enjoy the same liberties as if they had remained or were born, within the realm." The month of April 1607, is the epoch of the first permanent settlement on the coast of Virginia, the name then given to all that extent of country which now forms thirteen States. The emigrants took possession of a peninsula on the northern side of James-river, and erected a town which in honour of their fovereign they called James-Town. They foon experienced the embarraffments which are the usual lot of new fettlers. In a few months difeafes fwept away one half of their number. Those who survived were greatly chagrined by the many vexations incidental to their new and forlorn fituation. In 1600, the Southern or London company furrendered their rights to the crown and obtained a new patent. There were then added to the former adventurers, many of the first nobility and gentry. To them and their fuccessors were granted, in absolute property, the lands extending from Cape Comfort along the fea coast, fouthward 200 miles, from the fame promontory 200 miles northward, and from the Atlantic westward to the fouth sea. Licence was given to transport to Virginia, all persons willing to go thither. The colonists and their posterity were declared "to be entitled to the rights of subjects, as if they had remained within the realm." The company being thus favoured by their fovereign, were encouraged to proceed with spirit in supporting and extending their fettlement, but before this was thoroughly accomplished, a great waste of the human species had taken place. Within 20 years after the foundation of James-Town was laid, upwards of 2000 English fubjects had, at different times, migrated thither, but difeases

160g.

cases, famine, wars with the natives, and the other inconveniencies of their new fettlement, had made fuch havoc among these adventurers, that by the end of that period, there remained alive only about 1800 of that large number. The fame and other causes continued to operate fo forcibly that, notwithstanding frequent accessions from new adventurers, Virginia in 1670, fixty three years after the fettlement of James-Town contained no

more than 40,000 inhabitants.

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Thirteen years elapsed after James-Town began to be built before any permanent establishment was effected in the Northern or fecond Colony. Various attempts for that purpose had failed, nor was the arduous business accomplished, till it was undertaken by men who were influenced by higher motives than the extension of agriculture or commerce. These men had been called Puritans in England from their earnest desires of farther reformation in the established church, and particularly for their aversion to certain popish habits and ceremonies, which they deemed finful from their having been abused to idolatry. Such was the intolerance of the times, and so violent the zeal for uniformity, that popular preachers of this fect, though men of learning and piety were suspended, deprived, imprisoned, and ruined, for their not using garments or ceremonies which their adversaries acknowledged to be indifferent. Puritanism nevertheless gained ground. On experiment it was found that no attempts are more fruitless than those which are made with the view of bringing men to think alike on the subject of religion. The leads ers both of Church and State were too little acquainted with the genuine principles of policy and christianity, to apply the proper remedy for preferving peace among difcording fects. Instead of granting a general liberty of conscience, compulsory methods were adopted for enforcing An act was paffed for punishing all who refused to come to church or were present at any conventicle The punishment was imprisonment till the or meeting. convicted agreed to conform, and made a declaration of his conformity. If that was not done in three months, he was to quit the realm, and go into perpetual banishment. In case, he did not depart within the time limited, or returned afterwards without a license, he was to suff r death. Such is the refistance of the human mind to all impositions on conscience, that the more the Puritans were oppressed, the more were they attached to their diftinguished opinions,

1593.

1606.

and the more did their sect prevail. Several of them suffered death, in preference to purchasing an exemption from legal penalties, by doing what, in their opinion, was wrong. It was afterwards resolved to send others, who had equally persevered in their non-conformity into banishment. Many chose to avoid these evils by voluntarily

exiling themselves from their native country.

A congregation of these Puritans, under the pastoral care of Mr. John Robinson, being extremely harraffed for their religious opinions, refolved to elude their perfecutors by removing to Holland. They continued there ten years, and by hard labour, earned a living. Though they were much efteemed and kindly received by the Hollanders, they were induced by very cogent reasons to think of a fecond removal. The morals of the Dutch were, in their opinion, too diffolute; and they were afraid that their offfpring would conform to the bad examples daily before They had also an ardent defire of propagating religion in foreign lands, and of separating themselves from all the existing establishments in Europe, that they might have an opportunity, without interruption, of handing down to future ages the model of a pure church, free from the admixture of human additions. America, the colonifing of which, then excited a confiderable share of public attention, presented a proper theatre for this purpose. After serious and repeated addresses to Heaven for direction, they resolved to cross the Atlantic. An application on their behalf, was made to their native fovereign King James, for full liberty and freedom of conscience, but nothing more could be obtained than a promife, that he would connive at and not molest them. The hope that, when at the distance of 3000 miles, they should be out of the reach of ecclesiastical courts, induced them nevertheless to venture. They sailed 101 in number from Plymouth, in September, and arrived at Cape Cod in the November following. Before landing they formed themselves into a body politic, under the crown of England, for the purpose of " framing just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices," to which forty-one of their number subscribed their names, and promifed all due submission and obedience. After landing they employed themselves in making discoveries till the 20th of December. They then fixed on a place for fettlement, which they afterwards called New-Plymouth, and purchased the soil from its native proprietors. These adven-

turers were now at the commencement of a long and

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dreary

dreary winter, at an immense distance from their former 1620. habitations, on the strange coast of an uncultivated country, without a friend to welcome their arrival, or a house to thelter them. In fettling down on bare creation they had every obstacle to surmount that could prove their firmness, or try their patience. The climate was unfavourable; the feafon cold and pinching. The prospect of obtaining a supply of provisions, by cultivating the stubborn foil, required an immensity of previous labor, and was both distant and uncertain. From the diforders occasioned by their tedious voyage, with infufficient accommodations, together with those brought on them by the fatigues and exertions unavoidable in a new fettlement, and the rigour of the feafon, they buried forty-four perfons, nearly one half of their original number, within fix months after their landing. Animated with a high degree of religious fervor, they fupported these various hardships with unabated resolution. The prospect of an exemption from the tyranny of ecclefiaftical courts, and of an undiffurbed liberty to worthip their Creator in the way that was agreeable to their consciences, was in their estimation a sufficient counterbalance to all that they underwent.

This handful of people laid the foundation of New England. From them and their subsequent affociates have fprung the many thousands that have inhabited Massachufetts, New-Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode-Island. The Puritans, to which fect these primitive emigrants belonged, were a plain, frugal, industrious people who were strict observers of moral and social duties. They held, that the Bible was the fole rule both of faith and practicethat every man was bound to fludy it and to judge of its meaning for himself, and to follow that line of conduct and mode of worship, which he apprehended to be thereby required. They were also of opinion that no churches or church officers had any power over other churches or officers, fo as to controul them—that all church members had equal rights and privileges—that the imposition of articles of faith, modes of worship, habits or ceremonies, was subverfive of natural rights and an usurpation of power, not delegated to any man or body of men. They viewed church hierarchy, and especially the lordly pomp of Bishops, as opposed to the pure, simple, and equal spirit of christianity. Their sufferings for non-conformity disposed them to reflect on the nature and extent of civil authority, and led to a conviction that tyranny, whether in church or state, was

contrary

contrary to nature, reason and revelation. There was a fimilarity between their opinions of government, and those which they held on the fubject of religion. Each ftrengthened the other. Both were favourable to liberty, and

hostile to all undue exercise of authority.

1631.

It is matter of regret, that these noble principles of liberty ceased to operate on these emigrants soon after they got power into their hands. In the eleventh year after their fettlement in America they refolved, "that no man should be admitted to the freedom of their body politic, but fuch as were members of some of their churches," and afterwards, that none but fuch should share in the administration of civil government, or have a voice in an election." In a few years more, they had so far forgot their own fufferings, as to press for uniformity in religion. and to turn perfecutors, in order to accomplish it. No better apology can be made for this inconfistent conduct, than that the true grounds of liberty of conscience were then neither understood, nor practifed by any fect of christians. Nor can any more fatisfactory account of so open a dereliction of former principles be offered, than that human nature is the same in all bodies of men, and that those who are in, and those who are out of power, infenfibly exchange opinions with each other on a change of their respective situations. These intemperate proceedings were over-ruled for good. As the intolerance of England peopled Maffachufetts, fo the intolerance of that Province made many emigrate from it, and gave rife to various diftant settlements, which in the course of years were formed into other Provincial establishments. Connecticut, Rhode-Island and New-Hampshire, were in a great measure shoots from the old venerable trunk Massachusetts, and their early growth was much accelerated by her impolitic zeal for uniformity. The country which was subdivided into these four provinces had been called New-England ever fince the year 1614. The propriety of claffing them under one general name became more evident from their being fettled by the same kind of people, who were ftrongly connected with each other by blood, uniformity of manners, and a fimilarity of religious and political fentiments. The early population of this Northern country The Puritans, harraffed for their non-conwas rapid. formity in England, passed over to it in great numbers. In the short space of twenty-years from its first settlement 21,200 fettlers arrived in 298 vessels. About the year

year 1640, from a change of affairs, the emigration from

Old to New England in a great measure ceased.

Maryland was the third English colony settled in North America, but the first which from its beginning, was erected into a Province of the empire. The first and fecond colonies were many years governed by corporations, and in a manner subversive of natural liberty, but the third was from its first settlement ruled by laws enacted in a provincial legislature. The first emigration to Maryland confisting of about two hundred gentlemen, chiefly of the Roman Catholic religion, failed from England in November, 1632, and landed near the river Potowmack in the beginning of the subsequent year. Calvert their leader purchased the right of the Aborigines, and with their confent took possession of a town, which he called St. Mary's. He continued carefully to cultivate their friendship, and lived with them on terms of perfect The lands which had been thus ceded were planted with facility, because they had already undergone the discipline of Indian tillage. Food was therefore eafily procured. The Roman Catholics, unhappy in their native land, and defirous of a peaceful afylum, went over in great numbers to Maryland. Lord Baltimore, to whom the Province had been granted, laid the foundation of its future prosperity on the broad basis of security to, property, and of freedom in religion. The wisdom of these measures converted a dreary wilderness into a profperous colony, because men exert themselves in their several pursuits in proportion as they are affured of enjoying in fafety those bleffings which they wish for most. Never did a people enjoy more happiness than the inhabitants of Maryland under Cecilius the founder of the Province. While Virginia perfecuted the Puritans, her feverity compelled many to pass over into this new Province the Affembly of which had enacted, " that no persons, professing to believe in Christ Jesus should be molested in respect of their religion, or in the free exercise thereof." The prudence of the one colony acquired what the folly of the other had thrown away. Mankind, then beheld a new scene on the theatre of English America. They faw in Massachusetts the Puritans persecuting various fects, and the church of England in Virginia, actuated by the fame spirit, harraffing those who diffented from the established religion, while the Roman Catholics of Maryland tolerated and protected the professors of all denominations,

minations. In confequence of this liberal policy, and the other prudent measures adopted by the rulers of this Province, it rapidly increased in wealth and popualrest out tue lation.

The distractions which convulsed England for 25 years preceding the restoration in 1660, left no leifure for colonifing; but no fooner was Charles the Second restored to the throne of his ancestors, than it was resumed with

greater spirit than ever.

Soon after that event the restored monarch granted a charter to Connecticut, which had been previously fettled by a voluntary affociation of persons, who held the soil by an Indian title, without any authority from England. By this charter King Charles established a pure democracy. Every power, legislative, judicial and executive, was invested in the freemen of the corporation, or their delegates, and the colony was under no obligation to communicate its legislative acts to the national fovereign.

In the year following, a royal charter, with a grant of fimilar powers, was conferred on Rhode-Island and Providence plantations. These, like Connecticut, had been previously fettled by emigrants chiefly from Massachusetts, who as an independent people had feated themselves on land fairly obtained from the native proprietors, without any authority from the parent state. This colony was originally planted on the Catholic principle, " That every man who fubmits peaceably to the civil authority, may worship God, according to the dictates of his own conscience, without molestation," and under all the changes it has undergone, there has been no departure from that broad basis of universal toleration.

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In the fame year a patent was granted to Lord Clarendon and others, comprehending that extent of country, which now forms the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, Carolina though fettled originally as one government, was about the year 1728 divided into two. Georgia was, in the year 1732, formed by

George the Second into a diffinct Province.

In the year 1664, King Charles the Second gave to his brother James Duke of York, a patent which included New-York and New-Jersey. These Provinces had been previously settled by Dutch Colonists, and held as territories of the United Netherlands, but they were eafily reduced to the obedience of the King of England, who claimed the country by the right of prior discovery. The Duke

1663.

1662.

Duke of York in the same year, gave a deed of New-

Jerfey to Lord Berkely and Sir George Carteret.

Seventeen years afterwards King Charles gave to William Penn, a patent for Pennsylvania. Mr. Penn some time posterior to this, obtained a farther grant of the land on the Western side of the River Delaware, and South of Pennsylvania, which was formed into a separate Government, and is now the State of Delaware. Notwithflanding these charters Mr. Penn did not think himfelf invested with the right of the foil, till he had purchased it from the native proprietors. In the charter of Pennsylvania, there was no express stipulation as had been inferted in all other Colonial patents " that the Pennfylvanians and their descendants should be considered as fubjects born within the realm." But clauses were inferted, providing that " acts of Parliament concerning trade and navigation, and the customs, should be duly obferved." And it was also stipulated, that no custom or other contribution should be laid on the inhabitants or their estates, unless by the consent of the Proprietary, or Governor and Assembly, or by act of Parliament in England." The omission of the first clause, the insertion of the fecond, and the refervation in fayour of Parliament, in the last, may have been occasioned by difficulties which had then arisen about the rights of the Colonists and the power of Parliament over them. Maffachusetts had before that time questioned the authority of Parliament to tax them and legislate for them. The general clause that the Colonists should retain all the privileges of Englishmen, had already been made the basis of claims against which some in the Mother Country had many objections. Perhaps the ruling powers of England were fensible, that they had previously delegated too much of independence to their Colonies, and intended to be more guarded in future, but their caution was too late. Had it been feriously intended to control the natural order of events, by the feeble force of words and claufes in a charter, the experiment ought to have been tried from the first, and not referved for that of Pennfylvania, which was one of the last granted to the Colonies. Near a century after, Dr. Franklin when examined at the Bar of the British House of Commons explained the matter by faying " that the inhabitants from the first settlement of the Province relied, that the Parliament never would or could by virtue of that refervation tax them, till it had qualified itself constituti-

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onally for the exercise of such right, by admitting Repre-

fentatives from the people to be taxed." A final of

In the rapid manner just related was the English North American Continent parcelled out into diffinct Governments. Little did the wildom of the two preceding centuries foresee of the consequences both good and evil, that were to refult to the old world from discovering and colonifing the new. When we confider the immense floods of gold and filver, which have flowed from it into Europe -the fubsequent increase of industry and population, the prodigious extension of commerce, manufactures and navigation, and the influence of the whole on manners and arts, we see such an accumulation of good, as leads us to rank Columbus among the greatest benefactors of the human race: but when we view the injustice done the natives, the extirpation of many of their numerous nations, whose names are no more heard of-the havoc made among the first settlers-the slavery of the Africans, to which America has furnished the temptation, and the many long and bloody wars which it has occasioned, we behold such a crowd of woes, as excites an apprehension, that the evil has outweighed the good.

In vain do we look among ancient nations, for examples of Colonies established on principles of policy, fimilar to those of the Colonies of Great-Britain. England did not, like the republics of Greece, oblige her fons to form diftant communities in the wilds of the earth. Like Rome the did not give lands as a gratuity to foldiers, who became a military force for the defence of her frontiers. She did not, like Carthage, subdue the neighbouring States, in order to acquire an exclusive right to their commerce. No conquest was ever attempted over the Aborigines of America. Their right to the foil was difregarded, and their country looked upon as a wafte, which was open to the occupancy and use of other nations. It was confidered that fettlements might be there formed for the advantage of those who should migrate thither, as well as of the Mother Country. The rights and interests of the native proprie-

tors were, all this time, deemed of no account.

What was the extent of obligations by which Colonies planted under these circumstances, were bound to the Mother Country, is a subject of nice discussion. Whether these arose from nature and the constitution, or from compact, is a question necessarily connected with many others. While the friends of Union contended that the King of England

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England had a property in the foil of America, by virtue of a right derived from prior discovery; and that his fubjects by migrating from one part of his dominions to another, did not leffen their obligations to obey the fupreme power of the nation, it was inferred, that the emigrants to English America, continued to owe the fame obedience to the King and Parliament, as if they had never quitted the land of their nativity. But if as others contended, the Indians were the only lawful proprietors of the country in which their Creator had placed them, and they fold their right to emigrants who, as men, had a right to leave their native country, and as fubjects, had obtained chartered permission to do so, it follows from these premises, that the obligations of the Colonists to their parent State, must have resulted more from compact, and the prospect of reciprocal advantage, than from natural obligation. The latter opinions feem to have been adopted by feveral of the Colonists particularly in New-England. Sundry perfons of influence in that country always held, that birth was no necessary cause of subjection, for that the subject of any Prince or State, had a natural right to remove to any other State or quarter of the Globe, especially if deprived of liberty of conscience, and that, upon such removal, his fubjection ceased.

The validity of charters about which the emigrants to America were univerfally anxious, rests upon the same foundation. If the right of the fovereigns of England to the foil of America was ideal, and contrary to natural justice, and if no one can give what is not his own, their charters were on feveral accounts a nullity. In the eye of reason and philosophy, they could give no right to American territory. The only validity which fuch grants could have, was that the grantees had from their fovereign, a permission to depart from their native country, and negociate with the proprietors for the purchase of the foil, and thereupon to acquire a power of jurisdiction subject to his crown. These were the opinions of many of the fettlers in New-Eng-They looked upon their charters as a voluntary compact between their fovereign and themselves, by which they were bound neither to be fubject to, nor feek protection from any other Prince, nor to make any laws repugnant to those of England: but did not consider them as inferring an obligation of obedience to a Parliament, in which they were unrepresented. The prospects of advantage which the emigrants to America expected from the protection of their native sovereign, and the prospect of aggrandizement which their native sovereign expected from the extension of his empire, made the former very solicitous for charters, and the latter very ready to grant them. Neither reasoned clearly on their nature nor well understood their extent. In less than eight years 1500 miles of the sea coast were granted away, and so little did they who gave, or they who accepted of charters, understand their own transactions, that in several cases the same ground was covered by contradictory grants, and with an absurdiry that can only be palliated by the ignorance of the parties, some of the grants extended to the South Sea, over a country whose breadth is yet unknown,

and which to this day is unexplored.

Ideal as these charters were, they answered a temporary purpose. The colonists reposed confidence in them, and were excited to industry on their credit. They also deterred foreign European powers from disturbing them, because agreeably to the late law of nations, relative to the appropriation of newly discovered heathen countries, they inferred the protection of the fovereign who gave them. They also opposed a barrier to open and gross encroachments of the mother country on the rights of the colonists; a particular detail of these is not now necessary. Some general remarks may, nevertheless, be made on the early periods of colonial history, as they cast light on the late revolution. Long before the declaration of independence, several of the colonies on different occasions, declared, that they ought not to be taxed but by their own provincial affemblies, and that they confidered subjection to acts of a British parliament, in which they had no representation, as a grievance. It is also worthy of being noted, that of the thirteen colonies, which have been lately formed into States, no one (Georgia excepted) was settled at the expense of government. Towards the fettlement of that Southern frontier, confiderable fums have at different times been granted by parliament, but the twelve more Northern provinces, have been wholly fettled by private adventurers, without any advances from the national treasury. It does not appear, from existing records, that any compensation for their lands was ever made made to the Aborigines of America, by the crown or parliament of England; but policy as well as justice led the colonists to purchase and pay for what they occupied. This was done in almost every settlement, and they prospered most, who by justice and kindness took the greatest pains to conciliate the good will of the natives.

It is in vain to look for well balanced constitutions in the early periods of colonial history. Till the revolution in the year 1688, a period subsequent to the fettlement of the colonies, England herfelf can scarcely be faid to have had a fixed constitution. At that eventful era the line was first drawn between privileges of fubjects, and the prerogatives of fovereigns. The legal and constitutional history of the colonies, in their early periods, therefore, affords but little instruction. It is sufficient in general to observe, that in less than eighty years from the first permanent English settlement in North America; the two original patents granted to the Plymouth and London companies were divided, and fubdivided, into twelve distinct and unconnected provinces, and in fifty years more a thirteenth, by the name of Georgia, was added to the Southern extreme of previous establishments.

To each of these, after various changes, there was ultimately granted a form of government resembling, in its most effential parts, as far as local circumstances would permit, that which was established in the parent state. A minute description of constitutions, which no longer exist, would be both tedious and unprofitable. In general, it may be observed, that agreeably to the spirit of the British constitution, ample provision was made for the liberties of the inhabitants. The prerogatives of royalty and dependence on the mother country, were but feebly impressed, on the colonial forms of government. In some of the provinces the inhabitants chose their governors, and all other public officers, and their legislatures were under little or no controul. In others the crown delegated most of its power to particular persons, who were also invested with the property of the soil. In those which were most immediately dependent the King, he exercised no higher prerogatives over the colonists than over their fellow subjects in England, land, and his power over the provincial legislative assemblies, was not greater than what he was constitutionally vested with, over the house of commons in the Mother Country. From the acquicscence of the parent state, the spirit of her constitution and daily experience, the colonists grew up in a belief, that their local assemblies stood in the same relation to them, as the parliament of Great Britain, to the inhabitants of that island. The benefits of legislation were conferred on both, only through these constitutional channels.

It is remarkable, that though the English possessions in America were far inferior in natural riches to those which fell to the lot of other Europeans, yet the fecurity of property and of liberty derived from the English constitution, gave them a consequence to which the colonies of other powers, though fettled at an earlier day, have not yet attained. The wife and liberal policy of England towards her colonies, during the first century and half after their settlement, had a confiderable influence in exalting them to this pre-eminence. She gave them full liberty to govern themselves, by fuch laws as their local legiflatures thought necessary, and left their trade open to every individual in her dominions. She also gave them the amplest permission to pursue their respective interests in fuch manner, as they thought proper, and referved little for herself, but the benefit of their trade, and that of a political union under the fame head: The colonies, founded by other powers, experienced no fuch indul-gencies. Portugal and Spain burdened theirs with many vexatious regulations, gave encouragement only to what was for their own interest, and punished whatever had a contrary tendency. France and Holland did not adopt fuch oppressive maxims, but were in fact not much less rigorous and coercive. They parted, as it were, with the propriety of their colonies to mercantile affociations, which fold to the colonists the commodities of Europe, at an enormous advance, and took the produce of their lands, at a low price, and, at the fame time, discouraged the growth of any more than they could dispose of, at exceffive profits. These oppressive regulations were followed with their natural confequence: The fettlements thus restricted advanced but slowly in population and in wealth.

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The English colonies participated in that excellent form of government, with which their parent isle was blessed, and which has raised it to an admirable height of agriculture, commerce and manufactures. After many struggles, it had been acknowledged to be essential to the constitution of Great Britain, that the people could not be compelled to pay any taxes, nor be bound by any laws, but such as had been granted or enacted, with the consent of themselves, or of their representatives. It was also one of their privileges, that they could not be affected either in their property, their liberties, or their persons, but by the una-

nimous confent of twelve of their peers.

From the operation of these general principles of liberty, and the wife policy of Great Britain, her American fettlements increased in number, wealth and resources, with a rapidity which furpaffed all previous calculations. Neither ancient nor modern history can produce an example of colonies governed with equal wisdom, or flourishing with equal rapidity. In the short space of 150 years their numbers increased to three millions, and their commerce to fuch a degree, as to be more than a third of that of Great They also extended their settlements 1500 miles on the sea coast, and 300 miles to the westward. Their rapid population, though partly accelerated by the influx of strangers, was principally owing to internal causes. consequence of the equality of fortune, and simplicity of manners which prevailed among them; their inhabitants multiplied far beyond the proportion of old nations, corrupted and weakened by the vices of wealth, and above all, of vanity; than which, perhaps, there is no greater enemy to the increase of the human species.

The good effects of a wife policy and equal government, were not only discernible in raising the colonies of England to a pre-eminence over those of other European powers, but in raising some among themselves to greater importance than others. Their relative population and wealth, were by no means correspondent to their respective advantages of soil and climate. From the common disproportion between the natural and artificial wealth of different countries, it seems to be a general rule, that the more nature does for any body of men, the less they are disposed to do

for themselves.

The New-England Provinces, though possessed of comparatively a barren country, were improved much faster than others, which were blessed with a superior soil and Vol. I. milder climate. Their first settlers were animated with a high degree of that religious servor which excites to great undertakings. They also settled their vacant lands on principles of the wisest policy. Instead of granting large tracts to individuals, they sold the soil in small farms, to those who personally cultivated the same. Instead of disseminating their inhabitants over an extensive country, they formed successive settlements in townships of six miles square. They also made such arrangements in these townships, as co-extended the blessings of education, and of religious instruction, with their settlements. By these means industry and morality were propagated, and knowledge was gene-

rally diffused.

In proportion to their respective numbers, it is probable that no other country in the world contained more fober orderly citizens, and fewer who were profligate and abandoned. Those high crimes which are usually punished with death, were fo rare in New-England, that many years have elapsed in large populous settlements, without a fingle execution. Their less fertile soil disposed them to a spirit of adventure and their victorious industry rose superior to In carrying on the whale fishery they not every obstacle. only penetrated the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson's Bay, and Davis' straits; but pierced into the opposite regions of polar cold. While fome of them were striking the Harpoon on the coast of Africa, others pursued their gigantic game, near the shores of Brasil. While they were yet in their infancy as a political fociety, they carried on this po rilous business to an extent exceeding all that the perseverance of Holland, the activity of France, or the vigor of English enterprize, had ever accomplished. A spirit of liberty prompted their industry, and a free constitution guarded their civil rights. The country was fettled with yeomanry who were both proprietors, and cultivators of the foil Luxury was estranged from their borders. Enervating wealth and pinching poverty, were both equally rare. Early marriages, and a numerous offspring, were commonthence population was rapid, and the inhabitants generally poffessed that happy state of mediocrity, which favours the improvement both of mind and body.

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New-York adjoined New-England, but did not encrease with equal rapidity. A few by monopolizing large tracted land, reduced many to the necessity of being tenants, or of removing to other Provinces where land could be obtained on more favourable terms. The encrease of population in

this Province, was nevertheless great, when compared with that of old countries. This appears from the following statement of their numbers at different periods. In 1756, the province of New-York contained 83,233 whites, and in 1771, 148,124, an increase of nearly two for one, in the

space of fifteen years.

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Pennsylvania was at first settled under the auspices of the celebrated William Penn, who introduced a number of industrious inhabitants, chiefly of the sect of Quakers. The population of this country advanced equally with that of the New-England Provinces. Among the inducements operating on foreigners to settle in Pennsylvania, was a most excellent form of provincial government, which secured the religious as well as the civil rights of its inhabitants. While the mother country laboured under an oppressive ecclesiastical establishment, and while partialities of the same kind were sanctioned by law, in some of the American Provinces, persect liberty of conscience, and an exact equality of all sects, was, in every period, a part of the Constitution of Pennsylvania.

Quaker simplicity, industry, and frugality, contributed, in like manner, to the flourishing of that Province. The habits of that plain people correspond admirably, with a new country, and with republican constitutions. Opposed to idleness and extravagance, they combined the whole force of religion, with custom and laws, to exile these vices from their society. The first Quaker settlers were soon followed by Germans, whose industry was not inferior to their own. The emigrants from other countries who settled in Pennsylvania, followed these good examples, and industry and frugality became predominant virtues, over the whole Province.

The policy of a Loan-Office was also eminently beneficial. The Proprietaries of Pennsylvania sold their lands in small tracks, and on long credit. The purchasers were indulged with the liberty of borrowing on interest, paper bills of credit, out of the loan-office, on the mortgage of their lands. Perhaps there never was an institution which contributed more to the happiness of the people, or to the slourishing of a new country, than this land Loan-Office scheme. The Province being enriched by the clear interest of its loaned paper, was thereby enabled to defray the expences of government, with moderate taxes. The industrious farmer was surnished with the means of cultivating and stocking his farm. These improvements, by increasing the value of the land, not only established the credit of the

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paper, but enabled the borrower, in a few years, to pay off the original loan with the productions of the foil. The progressive improvement of Pennsylvania may be estimated from the increase of its trade. In the year 1704, that Province imported goods from the mother country, amounting in value only to £.11,499 sterling, but in 1772, to the value of £.507,909, an increase of nearly fifty for one,

in little more than half a century.

In Maryland and Virginia, a policy less favourable to population, and somewhat different from that of Pennsylvania, took place. The church of England was incorporated with the first settlement of Virginia, and in the lapse of time, it also became the established religion of Maryland. In both these Provinces, long before the American revolution, that church possessed a legal pre-eminence, and was maintained at the expence, not only of its own members, but of all other denominations. This deterred great numbers, especially of the Presbyterian denomination, who had emigrated from Ireland, from settling within the limits of these governments, and somented a spirit of discord between those who belonged to, and those who dissented from the established church.

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In these and the other Southern Provinces, domestic flavery was common. Though it was not by law forbidden any where, yet there were comparatively few flaves, to the northward of Maryland. The peaceable and benevolent religion of the Quakers, produced their united opposition to all traffic of the human race. Many individuals of other denominations, in like manner discountenanced it, but the principal ground of difference on this head between the Northern and Southern Provinces, arose, less, from religious principles, than from climate and local circumstances. In the former, they found it to be for their interest to cultivate their lands with whitemen, in the latter with those of an opposite colour. The stagnant waters, and low lands, which are so frequent on the shores of Maryland and Virginia, and on the coasts, and near the rivers in the Southern Provinces, generate diseases, which are more fatal to whites than blacks. There is a physical difference in the constitution of these varieties of the human species. The latter secrete less by the kidnies, and more by the glands of the skin than the former. greater degree of transpiration renders the blacks more tolerant of heat than the whites. The perspirable matter thrown off by the former, is more fætid than that of the latter.

latter. It is perhaps owing to these circumstances, that blacks enjoy better health in warm marshy countries, than whites.

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It is certain, that a great part of the low country in feveral of the provinces must have remained without cultivation, if it had not been cultivated by black men. From imagined necessity, founded on the natural state of the country, domestic flavery seemed to be forced on the Southern provinces. It favored cultivation, but produced many baneful confequences. It was particularly hostile to the proper education of youth. Industry, temperance, and abstinence, virtues effential to the health and vigor of both mind and body, were with difficulty practifed, where the labour of flaves, procured an abundance not only of the necessaries, but of the delicacies of life, and where daily opportunities and facilities were offered for early, excessive, and enervating indulgences. Slavery also led to the engrossing of land, in the hands of a few, It impeded the introduction of labouring freemen, and of course diminished the capacity of the country for active defence, and at the same time endangered internal tranquillity, by multiplying a species of inhabitants who had no interest in the soil. For if a slave can have a country in the world, it must be any other in preference to that in which he is compelled to labour for a master, Such is the force of habit, and the pliancy of human nature, that though degrading freemen to the condition of flaves, would, to many, be more intolerable, than death, yet Negroes who have been born and bred in habits of flavery, are so well satisfied with their condition. that several have been known to reject proffered freedom; and, as far as circumstances authorize us to judge, emancipation does not appear to be the wish of the generality The peafantry of few countries enjoy as much of the comforts of life, as the flaves who belong to good Interest concurs with the finer feelings of human nature, to induce flave-holders to treat with humanity and kindness, those who are subjected to their will and power. There is frequently more happiness in kitchens than parlours, and life is often more pleafantly enjoyed by the flave, than his mafter. The political evils of flavery do not fo much arise from the distresses it occations to flaves, as from its diminishing the incitements to industry, and from its unhappy influence on the general state of fociety. Where it is common, a few grow rich, and

and live in eafe and luxury, but the community is deprived of many of its resources for independent happiness, and depressed to a low station on the scale of national greatness. The aggregate industry of a country in which flaves and freemen are intermixed, will always be less than where there is a number of freemen equal to both. Nothing stimulates to industry so much as interest. The man who works for another, will contrive many artifices to make that work as little as possible, but he who has an immediate profit from his labour, will difregard tasks, times and feasons. In settlements where the foil is cultivated by flaves, it foon becomes unfashionable for freemen to labour, than which no greater curse can befal a country. The individuals, who by the industry of their flaves are released from the necessity of personal exertions, will be strongly tempted to many practices injurious to themselves and others. Idleness is the parent of every vice, while labour of all kinds fayours and facilitates the practice of virtue. Unhappy is that country where necessity compels the use of slaves, and unhappy are the people where the original decree of heaven, " that man should eat his bread in the sweat " of his face," is by any means whatever generally eluded.

The influence of these causes was so extensive, that though the Southern Provinces possessed the most fruitful foil and the mildest climate, yet they were far inferior to their neighbours in strength, population, industry, and aggregate wealth. This inferiority increased or diminished with the number of slaves in each Province, contrasted with the number of freemen. The same obfervation held good between different parts of the same Province. The sea coast, which from necessity, could be cultivated only by black men, was deficient in many of the enjoyments of life, and lay at the mercy of every bold invader, while the Western Country, where cultivation was more generally carried on by freemen, though fettled at a later period, sooner attained the means of felf defence, and, relatively, a greater proportion of those comforts with which a cultivated country rewards its industrious inhabitants.

In the Southern Provinces, the long credit given by British merchants, was a principal source of their flourishing. The immense capitals of the merchants trading to the North American Continent, enabled them to ex-

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tend credit to the term of several years. They received a profit on their goods, and an annual interest of sive per cent. on the sums for which they were sold. This enabled the American merchant to extend credit to the planter, from whom he received a higher interest than he paid in Great Britasn. The planters being furnished on credit, with slaves and every thing necessary for the cultivation of their lands, when careful and industrious, cleared so much more than the legal interest with which they were charged, that in a few years of successful planting, the difference enabled them to pay their debts and clear their capital. By the help of credit, a beneficial intercourse was established, which redounded to the benefit of both parties.

These causes eminently contributed to the prosperity of the English Provinces. Others, besides co-operating, to the same end, produced a warm love for liberty, a high sense of the rights of human nature, and a predilection for

independence.

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The first emigrants from England for colonising America left the mother country at a time when the dread of arbitrary power was the predominant paffion of the nati-Except the very modern charter of Georgia, in the year 1732, all the English Colonies obtained their charters and their greatest number of European settlers, between the years 1603 and 1688. In this period a remarkable struggle between prerogative and privilege commenced and was carried on, till it terminated in a revolution highly favourable to the liberties of the people. the year 1621, when the English House of Commons claimed freedom of speech, "as their ancient and un-"doubted right, and an inheritance transmitted to them "from their ancestors;" King James the first replied, "that he could not allow of their style, in mentioning "their ancient and undoubted rights, but would rather "have wished they had faid, that their privileges were "derived from the grace and permission of their sovereign." This was the opening of a dispute which occupied the tongues, pens and fwords of the most active men in the nation, for a period of seventy years. It is remarkable that the fame period is exactly co-incident with the fettlement of the English Colonies. James, educated in the arbitrary fentiments of the divine right of Kings, conceived his subjects to be his property, and that their privileges were matters of grace and favour flowing from

his generofity. This high claim of prerogative excited opposition in support of the rights of the people. In the progress of the dispute, Charles the First, son of King James, in attempting to levy ship-money, and other revenues without confent of Parliament, involved himfelf in a war with his subjects, in which, after various conflicts, he was brought to the block and fuffered death, as an enemy to the constitution of his country. Though the monarchy was restored under Charles the Second, and transmitted to James the Second, yet the fame arbitrary maxims being purfued, the nation, tenacious of its rights, invited the Prince of Orange to the fovereignty of the island, and expelled the reigning family from the throne. While these spirited exertions were made in support of the liberties of the parent isle, the English Colonies were settled, and chiefly with inhabitants of that class of people, which was most hostile to the claims of prerogative. Every transaction in that period of English history, supported the position that the people have a right to relift their fovereign, when he invades their liberties, and to transfer the crown from one to another, when the good of the community requires it.

The English Colonists were from their first settlement in America, devoted to liberty on English ideas, and English principles. They not only conceived themselves to inherit the privileges of Englishmen, but though in a co-

lonial fituation, actually poffessed them.

After a long war between King and Parliament, and a Revolution—these privileges were settled on the following fundamental principles. "That it was the undoubted right of English subjects, being freemen or freeholders, to give their property only by their own consent. That the House of Commons exercised the sole right of granting the money of the people of England, because that house alone, represented them. That taxes were the free gifts of the people to their rulers. That the authority of sovereigns was to be exercised only for the good of their subjects. That it was the right of the people to meet together, and peaceably to consider of their grievances—to petition for a redress of them, and finally, when intolerable grievances were unredressed, to seek relief, on the failure of petitions and remonstrances, by forcible means."

Opinions of this kind generally prevailing, produced among the colonists, a more determined spirit of opposition to all encroachments on their rights, than would probably have taken place, had they emigrated from the Mother

Country,

Country, in the preceding century, when the doctrines of paffive obedience, non-relistance, and the divine right of

kings, were generally received.

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That attachment to their fowereign, which was diminished in the first emigrants to America, by being removed to a greater distance from his influence was still farther diminished in their descendants. When the American revolution commenced, the inhabitants of the colonies were for the most part, the third and fourth, and sometimes the fifth or fixth generation from the original emigrants. In the same degree as they were removed from the parent stock, they were weaned from that partial attachment which bound their fore-fathers to the place of their nativity. The affection for the Mother Country, as far as it was a natural passion, wore away in successive generations,

till at last it had scarcely any existence.

The mercantile intercourse which connects different countries, was in the early periods of the English Colonies, far short of that degree which is necessary to perpetuate a friendly union. Had the first great colonial establishments been made in the Southern Provinces, where the fuitableness of native commodities would have maintained a brifk and direct trade with England—the constant exchange of good offices between the two countries, would have been more likely to perpetuate their friendship. But as the Eastern Provinces were the first which were thickly settled, and they did not for a long time cultivate an extensive trade with England, their descendants speedily lost the fond attachment which their fore-fathers felt to their Parent State. The bulk of the people in New England, knew little of the Mother Country, having only heard of her as a diftant kingdom, the rulers of which, had in the preceding century, perfecuted and banished their ancestors to the woods of America.

The distance of America from Great Britain generated ideas, in the minds of the colonists, favourable to liberty. Three thousand miles of ocean separated them from the Mother Country. Seas rolled, and months passed between orders, and their execution. In large governments the circulation of power is enseebled at the extremities. This results from the nature of things, and is the eternal law of extensive or detached empire. Colonists growing up to maturity, at such an immense distance from the seat of government, perceived the obligation of dependence much more feebly than the inhabitants of the parent isle, who

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not only faw, but daily felt the fangs of power. The wide extent and nature of the country contributed to the fame effect. The natural feat of freedom is among high mountains, and pathless deferts, such as abounds in the wilds of America.

The religion of the colonists also nurtured a love for liberty. They were chiefly protestants, and all protestantifm is founded on a strong claim to natural liberty, and the right of private judgment. A majority of them were of that class of men, who, in England, are called Diffenters. Their tenets being the protestantism of the protestant religion, are hostile to all interference of authority, in matters of opinion, and predispose to a jealousy for civil liberty. They who belonged to the Church of England were for the most part independents, as far as church government and hierarchy were concerned. They used the liturgy of that church, but were without Bishops, and were strangers to those systems which make religion an engine of state. That policy which unites the lowest curate with the greateft metropolitan, and connects both with the fovereign, was unknown among the colonists. Their religion was their own, ar Ineither imposed by authority, nor made subservient to political purposes. Though there was a variety of fects, they all agreed in the communion of liberty, and all reprobated the courtly doctrines of passive obedience, and The fame dispositions were fostered by non-resistance. the usual modes of education in the colonies. The study of law was common and fashionable. The infinity of difputes in a new and free country, made it lucrative, and multiplied its followers. No order of men has, in all ages, been more favourable to liberty, than lawyers. Where they are not won over to the service of government, they are formidable adversaries to it. Professionally taught the rights of human nature, they keenly and quickly perceive every attack made on them. While others judge of bad principles by the actual grievances they occasion, lawyers discover them at a distance, and trace future mischiefs from gilded innovations.

The reading of those colonists who were inclined to books, generally favoured the cause of liberty. Large libraries were uncommon in the New World. Disquisitions on abstructe subjects, and curious researches into antiquity, did not accord with the genius of a people settled in an uncultivated country, where every surrounding object impelled to action, and little leisure was left for speculation. Their

books

books were generally small in fize, and few in number: A great part of them consisted of those fashionable authors who have defended the cause of liberty. Cato's letters, the Independent Whig, and such productions, were common in one extreme of the colonies, while in the other, histories of the Puritans, kept alive the remembrance of the sufferings of their fore-fathers, and inspired a warm attachment, both to the civil and the religious rights of human nature.

In the Southern Colonies, flavery nurtured a spirit of liberty among the free inhabitants. All masters of slaves who enjoy personal liberty, will be both proud and jealous of their freedom. It is in their opinion, not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege. In them, the haughtiness of domination, combines with the spirit of liberty. Nothing could more effectually animate the opposition of a planter to the claims of Great Britain, than a conviction that those claims in their extent, degraded him to a degree of dependence on his fellow subjects, equally humiliating with that which existed between his slaves and himself.

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The state of society in the Colonies favoured a spirit of liberty and independence. Their inhabitants were all of one rank, Kings, Nobles and Bishops, were unknown among them. From their first settlement, the English Provinces received impressions favourable to democratic forms of government. Their dependent fituation forbad any inordinate ambition among their native fons, and the humility of their fociety, abstracted as they were from the fplendor and amusements of the Old World, held forth few allurements to invite the refidence of fuch from the Mother Country, as aspired to hereditary honors. In modern Europe, the remains of the feudal fystem have occasioned an order of men superior to that of the commonalty, but, as few of that class migrated to the Colonies, they were fettled with the yeomanry. Their inhabitants, pnaccustomed to that distinction of ranks which the policy of Europe has established, were strongly impressed with an opinion, that all men are by nature equal. They could not easily be perfuaded that their grants of land, or their civil rights flowed from the munificence of Princes. Many of them had never heard of Magna Charta, and those who knew the circumstances of the remarkable period of English hiftory, when that was obtained, did not rest their claims to liberty and property on the transactions of that important They looked up to Heaven as the fource of their rights, rights, and claimed, not from the promises of Kings, but from the Parent of the universe. The political creed of an American Colonist was short, but substantial. He believed that God made all mankind originally equal: That he endowed them with the rights of life, property, and as much liberty as was consistent with the rights of others. That he had bestowed on his vast family of the human race, the earth for their support, and that all government was a political institution between men naturally equal, not for the aggrandizement of one, or a few, but for the general happiness of the whole community. Impressed with sentiments of this kind, they grew up from their earliest infancy with that considence which is well calculated to inspire a love for liberty, and a pre-possession in favour of in-

dependence.

In confequence of the vast extent of vacant country, every colonist was, or easily might be a freeholder, Settled on lands of his own, he was both farmer and landlord-producing all the necessaries of life from his own grounds, he felt himself both free and independent. Each individual might hunt, fish, or fowl, without injury to his neighbours. These immunities which in old countries are guarded by the fanction of penal laws, and monopolized by a few, are the common privileges of all in America. Colonists growing up in the enjoyment of fuch rights, felt the restraint of law more feebly than they who are educated in countries where long habits have made submission familiar. The mind of man naturally relishes liberty-Wherever, from the extent of a new and unfettled country, fome abridgments thereof are useless, and others impracticable, this natural defire of freedom is strengthened, and the independent mind revolts at the idea of subjection.

The Colonists were also preserved from the contagion of ministerial influence by their distance from the metropolis. Remote from the seat of power and corruption, they were not over-awed by the one, nor debauched by the other. Few were the means of detaching individuals from the interest of the public. High offices were neither sufficiently numerous nor lucrative to purchase many adherents, and the most valuable of these were conferred on natives of Britain. Every man occupied that rank only which his own industry, or that of his near ancestors had procured him. Each individual being

being cut off from all means of rising to importance, but by his personal talents, was encouraged to make the most of those with which he was endowed. Prospects of this kind excited emulation, and produced an enterprising laborious set of men, not easily overcome by difficulties, and full of projects for bettering their condition.

The enervating opulence of Europe had not yet reached the colonists. They were destitute of gold and silver, but abounded in the riches of nature. A sameness of circumstances and occupations created a great sense of equality, and disposed them to union in any common cause, from the success of which, they might expect to

partake of equal advantages.

The colonies were communities of separate independent individuals, under no general influence, but that of their personal feelings and opinions. They were not led by powerful families, nor by great officers in church or state. Residing chiefly on lands of their own, and eniployed in the wholesome labours of the field, they were in a great measure strangers to luxury. Their wants were few, and among the great bulk of the people, for the most part supplied from their own grounds. Their enjoyments were neither far-fetched, nor dearly purchafed, and were fo moderate in their kind, as to leave both mind and body unimpaired. Inured from their early years to the toils of a country life, they dwelled in the midst of rural plenty. Unacquainted with ideal wants, they delighted in personal independence. Removed from the preffures of indigence, and the indulgence of affluence, their bodies were strong, and their minds vigorous.

The great bulk of the British colonists were farmers, or planters, who were also proprietors of the soil. The merchants, mechanics and manufacturers, taken collectively, did not amount to one fifteenth of the whole number of inhabitants. While the cultivators of the soil depend on nothing but Heaven and their own industry, other classes of men contract more or less of servility, from depending on the caprice of their customers. The excess of the farmers over the collective numbers of all the other inhabitants, gave a cast of independence to the manners of the people, and diffused the exalting sentiments which have always predominated among those who are cultivators of their own grounds. These were farther

farther promoted by their circumstances, which deprived them of all superfluity for idleness, or effeminate indulgence.

The provincial constitutions of the English colonies nurtured a spirit of liberty. The King and government of Great Britain held no patronage in America, which could create a portion of attachment and influence sufficient to counteract that spirit in popular assemblies, which when left to itself, illy brooks any authority that interferes with its own.

The inhabitants of the colonies from the beginning, especially in New England, enjoyed a government which was but little short of being independent. They had not only the image, but the substance of the English constitution. They chose most of their magnitrates, and paid them all. They had in effect the sole direction of their internal government. The chief mark of their subordination consisted in their making no laws repugnant to the laws in their Mother Country—Their submitting to have such laws as they made to be repealed by the King, and their obeying such restrictions as were laid on their trade by parliament. The latter were often evaded, and with impunity. The other small checks were scarcely felt, and for a long time were in no resi-

pests injurious to their interests.

Under these favourable circumstances, colonies in the new world had advanced nearly to the magnitude of a nation, while the greatest part of Europe was almost wholly ignorant of their progress. Some arbitrary proceedings of governors, proprietary partialities, or democratical jealousies, now and then interrupted the political calm, which generally prevailed among them, but these and other occasional impediments of their prosperity, for the most part, soon subsided. The circumstances of the country afforded but little scope for the intrigues of politicians, or the turbulence of dema-The colonists being but remotely affected by the buftlings of the old world, and having but few objects of ambition or contention among themselves, were absorbed in the ordinary cares of domestic life, and for a long time exempted from a great proportion of those evils which the governed too often experience, from the passions and follies of statesmen. But all this time they were rifing higher, and though not fenfible of it, growing to a greater degree of political confequence. One

One of the first events, which as an evidence of their increasing importance, drew on the colonies a share of public attention, was the taking of Louisbourg from France, while that country was at war with Great Britain. This enterprize was projected by Governor 1745-Shirley, of Massachusetts, and undertaken by the sole authority of the legislature of that Colony. It was carried by only a fingle vote to make the attempt, but after the adoption of the measure, there was an immediate union of all parties, and all were equally zealous in carrying it into execution. The expedition was committed to General Pepperell, and upwards of 5000 men were speedily raised for the service, and put under his command. This force arrived at Canfo on the 4th of April: A British marine force from the West-Indies, commanded by Commodore Warren, which arrived in the same month, acted in concert with these land forces. Their combined operations were carried on with fo much judgment, that on the 17th of June the

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fortress capitulated. The war in which Louisbourg was taken, was scarcely ended when another began, in which the colonies were distinguished parties. The reduction of that fortress by colonial troops, must have given both to France and England, enlarged ideas of the value of American territory, and might have given rife to that eagerness for extending the boundaries of their respective colonies, which foon after, by a collision of claims to the same ground, laid the foundation of a bloody war between the two nations. It is neither possible nor necessary to decide on the rights of either to the lands about which this contest began. It is certain that the prospects of convenience and future advantage, had much more influence on both, than the confiderations of equity. As the contending powers confidered the rights of the native inhabitants of no account, it is not wonderful that they should not agree in settling their own. The war was brought on in the following manner. About the year 1749, a grant of 600,000 acres of land in the neighbourhood of the Ohio, was made out in favour of certain persons in Westminster, London, and Virginia, who had affociated under the title of the Ohio company. At this time France was in possession of the country on both fides of the mouth of the Mif-

fiffippi, as well as of Canada, and wished to form a communication between these two extremities of her territories in North America. She was therefore alarmed at the scheme in agitation by the Ohio company in as much as the land granted to them, lay between her Northern and Southern fettlements, Remonstrances against British encroachments, as they were called having been made in vain by the Governor of Canada, the French at length seized some British subjects who were trading among the Twightwees, a nation of Indians near the Ohio, as intruders on the land of his most Christian Majesty, and sent them to a fort on the South fide of Lake Erie. The Twightwees by way of retaliation for capturing British traders, whom they deemed their allies, feized three French traders and fent them to Pennsylvania. The French persisting in their claims to the country on the Ohio, as part of Canada, strengthened themselves by erecting new forts. in its vicinity, and at length began to feize and plunder every British trader found on any part of that river; Repeated complaints of these violences being made to the Governor of Virginia, it was at length determined to fend a fuitable person to the French commandant near the Ohio, to demand the reason of his hostile proceedings, and to infift on his evacuating a fort he had lately built. Major Washington being then but little more than 21 years of age, offered his fervice, which was thankfully accepted. The distance to the French fettlement was more than 400 miles, and one half of the rout led through a wilderness, inhabited only by Indians. He nevertheless set out in an uncommonly severe feafon, attended only by one companion. From Winchester he proceeded on foot, with his provisions on his back. When he arrived and delivered his melfage, the French commandant refused to comply, and claimed the country as belonging to the King his mafter, and declared that he should continue to seize and send as prisoners to Canada, every Englishman that should attempt to trade on the Ohio, or any of its branches. Before Major Washington returned, the Virginians had fent out workmen and materials to erect a fort at the conflux of the Ohio, and the Monongahela. While they were engaged in this work, the French came upon them-lrove them out of the country, and erected a regular fortification on the same spot. Thefe spirited proceedings

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proceedings overfet the schemes of the Ohio company, but its members both in England and America were too powerful to brook the disappointment. It was therefore refolved to instruct the colonies to oppose with arms the encroachments of the French on the British territories, as these Western lands were called. In obedience to these instructions. Virginia raised three hundred men, put them under the command of Colonel Washington, and sent them on towards the Ohio. An engagement between May 28, them and a party of French took place, in which the latter were defeated. On this Mr. de Villier, the French commandant marched down with 900 men, befides Indians, and attacked the Virginians. Colonel Washington made a brave defence behind a small unfinished intrenchment, called Fort Necessity; but at length ac-

cepted of honourable terms of capitulation.

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From the eagerness discovered by both nations for these lands, it occurred to all, that a rupture between France and England could not be far distant. It was also evident to the rulers, of the latter, that the colonies would be the most convenient centre of operation for repressing French incroachments. To draw forth their colonial refources in an uniform fystem of operations, then, for the first time, became an object of public attention. digest a plan for this purpose, a general meeting of the Governors, and most influential members of the Provincial Affemblies, was held at Albany. The Commissioners 1754. at this Congress, were unanimously of opinion, that an union of the colonies was necessary, and they proposed a plan to the following effect, " that a grand council should be formed of members to be chosen by the Provincial Affemblies, which Council, together with a Governor, to be appointed by the Crown, should be authorised to make general laws, and also to raise money from all the colonies for their common defence. The leading members of the Provincial Affemblies were of opinion, that if this plan was adopted they could defend themselves from the French, without any affistance from Great-Britain. This plan when fent to England, was not acceptable to the Ministry, and in lieu thereof, they proposed "that the Governors of all the colonies, attended by one or two members of their respective Councils," which were for the most part of royal appointment, " should from time to time concert measures for the whole colonies-erect forts, and raise troops, with a power to draw upon the British VOL. I. D

treasury in the first instance: but to be ultimately re-imbursed by a tax to be laid on the colonies by act of Parliament." This was as much disrelished by the colonists, as the former plan had been by the British Ministry. The principle of some general power operating on the whole of the colonies, was still kept in mind, though dropped

for the present.

The ministerial plan laid down above was transmitted to Governor Shirley; and by him communicated to Dr. Franklin, and his opinion thereon requested. That sagacious patriot sent to the Governor an answer in writing, with remarks upon the proposed plan, in which, by his strong reasoning powers, on the first view of the new subject, he anticipated the substance of a controversy, which for twenty years employed the tongues, pens and swords of both countries.

The policy of repressing the encroachments of the French on the British colonies, was generally approved, both in England and America. It was therefore resolved to take effectual measures for driving them from the Ohio, and also for reducing Niagara, Crown-Point, and the other posts which they held within the limits claimed by

the King of Great-Britain.

To effect the first purpose, General Braddock was sent from Ireland to Virginia with two regiments, and was there joined by as many more, as amounted in the whole to 2200 men. He was a brave man, but destitute of the other qualifications of a great officer. His haughtiness disgusted the Americans, and his severity made him difagreeable to the regular troops. He particularly flighted the country militia, and the Virginia officers. Colonel Washington begged his permission to go before him and four the woods with his provincial troops, who were well acquainted with that fervice, but this was refused. The General with 1400 men pushed on incautiously, till he fell into an ambuscade of French and Indians, by whom he was defeated, and mortally wounded. The regulars, as the British troops at that time were called, were thrown into confusion, but the Provincials more used to Indian fighting, were not fo much disconcerted. They continued in an unbroken body under Colonel Washington, and by covering the retreat of the regulars, prevented their being entirely cut off.

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Notwithstanding these hostilities, war had not yet been formally declared. Previous to the adoption of that mea-

June 9.

fure, Great-Britain, contrary to the usages of nations, made prisoners of 8000 French sailors. This heavy blow for a long time crippled the naval operations of France, but at the same time, inspired her with a desire to retaliate whenever a proper opportunity should present itself. For two or three years after Braddock's defeat, the war was carried on against France without vigor or success, but when Mr. Pitt was placed at the head of the ministry, public affairs assumed a new aspect. Victory every where erowned the British arms, and in a short time the French were dispossessed, not only of all the British territories on which they had encroached, but also of Quebec, the ca-

pital of their ancient province, Canada.

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In the course of this war, some of the colonies made exertions fo far beyond their reasonable quota, as to merit a re-imbursement from the national treasury; but this was not univerfally the case. In consequence of internal disputes, together with their greater domestic security, the necessary supplies had not been raised in due time. by others of the Provincial Assemblies. That a British Minister should depend on colony legislatures, for the execution of his plans, did not well accord with the vigorous and decifive genius of Mr. Pitt, but it was not prudent by any innovation, to irritate the colonies during a war in which, from local circumstances, their exertions were peculiarly beneficial. The advantages that would refult from an ability to draw forth the refources of the colonies, by the fame authority which commanded the wealth of the Mother Country, might in these circumflances have fuggested the idea of taxing the colonies, by authority of the British Parliament. Mr. Pitt is said to have told Mr. Franklin, "that when the war closed, if he should be in the ministry, he would take measures to prevent the colonies from having a power to refuse or delay the supplies that might be wanted for national purposes," but did not mention what those measures should be. As often as money or men were wanted from the colonies, a requisition was made to their legislatures. These were generally and cheerfully complied with. Their exertions with a few exceptions were great, and manifested a ferious defire to carry into effect the plans of Great-Britain, for reducing the power of France.

In the profecution of this war, the advantages which Great-Britain derived from the colonies, were feverely felt by her enemies. Upwards of 400 privateers which

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1759.

were fitted out of the ports of the British colonies, fuccefsfully cruifed on French property. These not only ravaged the West-India islands belonging to his most Christian Majesty, but made many captures on the coast of France. Befides diffreffing the French nation by privateering, the colonies furnished 23,800 men to co-operate with the British regular forces in North America. also fent powerful aids both in men and provisions, out of their own limits, which facilitated the reduction of Martinique, and of the Havannah. The fuccess of their privateers—the co-operation of their land forces—the convenience of their harbours, and their contiguity to the West-India islands, made the colonies great acquisitions to Britain, and formidable adverfaries to France. From their growing importance, the latter had much to fear. Their continued union with Great-Britain, threatened the subversion of the commerce, and American possessions, of France.

1763.

After hostilities had raged nearly eight years—a general peace was concluded, on terms, by which France ceded Canada to Great-Britain. The Spaniards having also taken part in the war, were, at the termination of it, induced to relinquish to the same power, both East and West Florida. This peace gave Great Britain possession of an extent of country equal in dimensions to several of the kingdoms of Europe. The possession of Canada in the North, and of the two Floridas in the South, made her almost sole mistress of the North American Continent.

This laid a foundation for future greatness, which excited the envy and the fears of Europe. Her navy, her commerce, and her manufactures had greatly increased, when the held but a part of the Continent; and when the was bounded by the formidable powers of France and Spain. Her probable future greatness, when without a rival, and with a growing vent for her manufactures, and increasing employment for her marine, threatened to destroy that balance of power, which European sovereigns have for a long time endeavoured to preferve. Kings are republicans with respect to each other, and behold with democratic jealoufy any one of their order towering above the rest. The aggrandizement of one, tends to excite the combination, or at least the wishes of many, to reduce him to the common level. From motives of this kind, a great part of Europe not long fince combined against Venice; and soon after against Louis the XIVth

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XIVth of France. With the same suspicious eye, was the naval superiority of Great-Britain, viewed by her neighbours. They were in general, disposed to savour any convulsion which promised a diminution of her over-

grown power.

The addition to the British empire of new provinces, equal in extent to old kingdoms, not only excited the jealousy of European powers, but occasioned doubts in the minds of enlightened British politicians, whether or not such immense acquisitions of territory would contribute to the felicity of the parent State. They saw, or thought they saw, the seeds of disunion planted in the too widely extended empire. Power like all things human, has its limits, and there is a point beyond which the longest and sharpest sword fails of doing execution. To combine in one uniform system of Government, the extensive territory then subjected to the British sway appeared to men of resection, a work of doubtful practicability: Nor were they mistaken in their conjectures.

The feeds of discord were soon planted, and speedily grew up to the rending of the empire. The high notions of liberty and independence which were nurtured, in the colonies, by their local fituation, and the state of society in the new world, were increased by the removal of hostile neighbours. The events of the war had also given them some experience in military operations, and some confidence in their own ability. Forefeeing their future importance from the rapid increase of their numbers, and extension of their commerce; and being extremely jealous of their rights, they readily admitted, and with pleasure indulged ideas and sentiments which were favourable to independence. While combustible materials were daily collecting in the new world, a spark to kindle the whole was produced in the old. Nor were there wanting those, who, from a jealousy of Great-Britain, helped to

fan the flame.

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## C H A P. II.

The Origin of the disputes between Great-Britain and her Colonies, in the Year 1764, and its progress till 1773.

FROM the first settlement of English America, till the close of the war of 1755, the conduct of Great Britain towards her colonies, affords an useful lesson

to those who are disposed to colonisation. From that era, it is equally worthy of the attention of those who wish for the reduction of great empires to small ones, In the first period, Great Britain regarded the provinces as instruments of commerce. Without charging herself with the care of their internal police, or feeking a revenue from them, she contented herself with a monopoly of their trade. She treated them as a judicious mother does her dutiful children. They shared in every privilege belonging to her native fons, and but flightly felt the inconveniences of subordination. Small was the catalogue of grievances, with which even democratical jealoufy charged the parent state, antecedent to period before mentioned. The following appear to have been the chief: An act of the British parliament for prohibiting the cutting down pitch and tar trees, not being within a fence or enclosure, and fundry acts which operated against colonial manufactures. By one of these it was made illegal after the 24th of June, 1750, to erect in the colonies any mill or other engine for flitting or rolling of iron, or any plating forge, to work with a tilt-hammer, or any furnace for making steel. By another, hatters were restrained from taking more than two apprentices at a time, or any for less than feven years, and from employing negroes in the business. The colonists were also prohibited from transporting hats, and home manufactured woollens, from one province to another. These regulations were for the most part evaded, but if carried into execution would have been flightly inconvenient, and only to a few. The articles, the manufacturing of which were thus prohibited, could be purchased at a cheaper rate from England, and the hands who made them, could be as well employed in agriculture.

1763.

Though these restrictions were a species of affront, by their implying that the colonists had not sense enough to discover their own interest, and though they seemed calculated to crush their native talents, and to keep them in a constant state of inferiority, without any hope of arriving at those advantages to which, by the native riches of their country, they were prompted to aspire; yet is no other grievances had been superadded to what existed in 1763, these would have been soon forgotten, for their pressure was neither great nor universal. The good resoluting

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falting to the colonies, from their connection with Great

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Till the year 1764, the colonial regulations seemed to 1764. have no other object but the common good of the whole empire. Exceptions to the contrary, were few, and had no appearance of fystem. When the approach of the colonies to manhood, made them more capable of refifting impositions. Great Britain changed the ancient system under which her colonies had long flourished. When policy would rather have dictated a relaxation of authority, the role in her demands, and multiplied her reftraints.

From the conquest of Canada in 1759, some have supposed that France began secretly to lay schemes, for wresting those colonies from Great Britain, which she was not able to conquer. Others alledge, that from that period the colonifts, released from all fears of dangerous neighbours, fixed their eyes on independence, and took fundry steps preparatory to the adoption of that measure, Without recurring to either of these opinions, the known felfishness of human nature is sufficient to account for that demand on the one fide, and that refusal on the other, which occasioned the revolution. It was natural for Great-Britain to wish for an extension of her authority over the colonies, and equally fo for them on their approach to maturity, to be more impatient of subordination, and to refift every innovation, for increasing the degree of their dependence.

The fad ftory of colonial oppression commenced in the year 1764. Great-Britain then adopted new regulations, respecting her colonies, which, after disturbing the ancient harmony of the two countries for about twelve years,

terminated in a difmemberment of the empire.

These consisted in restricting their former commerce, but more especially in subjecting them to taxation by the British Parliament. By adhering to the spirit of her navigation act, in the course of a century the trade of Great Britain had encreased far beyond the expectation of her most fanguine fons, but by rigidly enforcing the strict letter of the fame, in a different fituation of public affairs, effects directly the reverse were produced.

From the enterprising commercial spirit of the colonists, the trade of America, after filling all its proper channels, fwelled out on every fide, and overflowed its proper banks with a rich redundance. In the cure of evils which are

1764.

closely

closely connected with the causes of national prosperity, vulgar precaution ought not to be employed. In severely checking a contraband trade, which was only the over-flowing of an extensive fair trade, the remedy was worse than the disease.

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For some time before and after the termination of the war of 1755, a confiderable intercourse-had been carried on between the British and Spanish colonies, consisting of the manufactures of Great-Britain, imported by the former and fold to the latter, by which the British colonies acquired gold and filver, and were enabled to make remittances to the Mother Country. This trade, though it did not clash with the spirit of the British navigation laws, was forbidden by their letter. On account of the advantages which all parties, and particularly Great-Britain, reaped from this intercourse, it had long been winked at by persons in power, but at the period before mentioned, some new regulations were adopted, by which it was almost destroyed, This was effected by armed cutters, whose commanders were enjoined to take the usual custom-house oaths, and to act in the capacity of revenue officers. So fudden a ftoppage of an accustomed and beneficial commerce, by an unufally rigid execution of old laws, was a ferious blow to the Northern colonies. It was their misfortune, that though they stood in need of vast quantities of British manufactures, their country produced very little that afforded a direct remittance to pay for them. They were, therefore, under a necessity of seeking elsewhere, a market for their produce, and by a circuitous route, acquiring the means of supporting their credit with the mother country, This they found by trading with the Spanish and French colonies in their neighbourhood. From them they acquired gold, filver, and valuable commodities, the ultimate profits of which centered in Great-Britain. This intercourse gave life to business of every denomination, and established a reciprocal circulation of money and merchandize, to the benefit of all parties concerned. Why a trade, effential to the colonies, and which, fo far from being detrimental, was indirectly advantageous to Great-Britain, fhould be fo narrowly watched, and fo feverely restrained, could not be accounted for by the Americans, without supposing that the rulers of Great-Britain were jealous of their adventurous commercial spirit, and of their encreasing number of feamen. Their actual fufferings were great, but their apprehensions were greater. Instead of viewing the parent state, as they had long done, in the light of an affection-

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ate mother, they conceived her, as beginning to be influ-

enced by the narrow views of an illiberal stepdame.

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After the 20th of September, 1764, the trade between the British, and the French, and Spanish colonies, was in fome degree legalifed, but under circumstances, that brought no relief to the colonists, for it was loaded with fech enormous duties, as were equivalent to a prohibition. The preamble to the act, for this purpose, was alarming. "Whereas it is just and necessary, that a revenue be raised in America, for defraying the expences of defending, protecting, and fecuring the fame, We, the commons, &c. towards raising the same, give, and grant unto your Majesty, the sum of" (here followed a specification of duties upon foreign clayed fugar, indigo, and coffee, of foreign produce, upon all wines except French, upon all wrought filk, and all calicoes, and upon every gallon of molafles, and fyrups, being the produce of a colony, not under the dominion of his Majesty.) It was also enacted, that the monies ariting from the importation of these articles into the colonies, should be paid into the receipt of his Majesty's exchequer, there to be entered separate, and reserved, to be disposed of by Parliament, towards defraying the necessary expences of defending, protecting, and securing America. Till that act passed, no act avowedly for the purpole of revenue, and with the ordipary title and recital of fuch, was to be found in the parliamentary statute book. The wording of it made the colonists fear that the Parliament would go on in charging them with fuch taxes they pleafed, and for the support of fuch military force as they should think proper. The act was the more difgusting, because the monies arising from it were ordered to be paid in specie, and regulations were adopted against colonial paper money. To obstruct the avenues of acquiring gold and filver, and at the same time to interdict the use of paper money, appeared to the colonists as a farther evidence that their interests were either misunderstood or disregarded. The imposition of duties for the purpose of raising a revenue in America, was confidered as a dangerous innovation, but the methods adopted for fecuring their collection, were refented as arbitrary and unconstitutional. It was enacted by Parliament, that whenever offences should be committed against the acts, which imposed them, the profecutor might bring his action for the penalty, in the courts of admiralty, by which means the defendant loft the advantage of being tried by a jury, and was subjected to the necessity of having his case decided upon by a single man, a creature of the crown, whose salary was to be paid out of forfeitures adjudged by himself; and also according to a course of law which exempted the prosecutor from the trouble of proving his accusation, and obliged the defendant either to evince his innocence, or to suffer. By these regulations, the guards which the constitution had placed round property, and the sences which the ancestors of both countries had erected against arbitrary power, were thrown down, as far as they concerned the colonists, charged with violating the laws,

for raising a revenue in America.

They who directed public affairs in Great Britain feared, that if the collection of these duties was enforced only in the customary way, payment would be often eluded. To obviate that disposition which the colonists discovered to screen one another in disobeying offensive acts of parliament, regulations were adopted, bearing hard on their constitutional rights. Unwilling as the colonists were to be excluded by the imposition of enormous duties, from an accustomed and beneficial line of business; it is not wonderful that they were disposed to represent these innovations of the Mother Country, in the most unfavourable point of view. The heavy losses to which many individuals were fubjected, and the general diffress of the mercantile interest, in several of the oldest colonies, soured the minds of many. That the Mother Country should infringe her own constitution, to cramp the commerce of her colonies, was a fruitful fubject of declamation: but these murmurings would have evaporated in words, had Great-Britain proceeded to no farther innovations. Instead of this, she adopted the novel idea of raising from the colonies an efficient revenue, by direct internal taxes, laid by authority of her parliament.

Though all the colonists disrelished, and many, from the pressure of actual sufferings, complained of the British restrictions on their manusactures and commerce, yet a great majority was disposed to submit to both. Most of them acknowledged that the exercise of these powers was incident to the sovereignty of the Mother Country, especially when guarded by an implied contract, that they were to be only used for the common benefit of the empire. It was generally allowed, that as the

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planting of colonies was not defigned to erect an independent government, but to extend an old one, the Parrent State had a right to restrain their trade in every

way which conduced to the common emolument.

They for the most part considered the Mother Country as authorifed to name ports and nations to which alone their merchandize should be carried, and with which alone they should trade: but the novel claim of taxing them without their confent, was univerfally reprobated, as contrary to their natural, chartered and conflitufional rights. In opposition to it, they not only alledged the general principles of liberty, but ancient ulage. During the first 150 years of their existence, they had been left to tax themselves and in their own way. If there were any exceptions to this general rule. they were too inconfiderable to merit notice. In the war of 1755, the events of which were fresh in the recollection of every one, the parliament had in no instance attempted to raise either men or money in the colonies, by its own authority. As the claim of taxation on one fide, and the refusal of it on the other, was the very hinge on which the revolution turned, it merits a

particular discussion.

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Colonies were formerly planted by warlike nations, to keep their enemies in awe, to give vent to a furplus of inhabitants, or to discharge a number of discontented and troublesome citizens. But in modern ages, the spirit of violence being in some measure sheathed in commerce, colonies have been fettled by the nations of Europe, for the purposes of trade. These were to be attained by their raifing for the Mother Country fuch commodities as the did not produce, and fupplying themfelves from her with fuch things as they wanted. In fubferviency to these views, Great-Britain planted colonies, and made laws, obliging them to carry to her all their products which the wanted, and all their raw materials which she chose to work up. Besides this restriction, the forbad them to procure manufactures from any other part of the globe, or even the products of European countries which could rival her, without being first brought to her ports. By a variety of laws she regulated their trade in such a manner, as was thought most conducive to their mutual advantage, and her own particular welfare. This principle of commercial monopoly, ran through no less than 29 acts of parliament from 1660,

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to 1764. In all these acts the system of commerce was established, as that from which alone their contributions to the strength of the empire were expected. During this whole period a parliamentary revenue was no part of the object of colonifation. Accordingly in all the laws which regarded them, the technical words of revenue laws, were avoided. Such have usually a title purporting their being " grants," and the words " give and usually precede their enacting clauses. Although duties were imposed on America by previous acts of parliament, no one title of " giving an aid to his majesty," or any other of the usual titles to revenue acts, was to be found in any of them. They were intended as regulations of trade, and not as fources of national supplies. Till the year 1764, all stood on commercial regulation and restraint.

While Great Britain attended to this first fystem of colonifation, her American fettlements, though exposed in unknown climates, and unexplored wilderneffes, grew and flourished; and in the same proportion, the trade and riches of the Mother Country encreased, estimate may be made of this increase, from the following statement. The whole export trade of England, including that to the colonies, in the year 1704, amounted to f.6,500,000 sterling: but so immensely had the tolonies encreased, that the exports to them alone in the year 1772, amounted to £.6,022,132 sterling, and they were yearly increasing. In the short space of 68 years, the colonies added nearly as much to the export commerce of Great-Britain, as she had grown to by a progreffive increase of improvement in 1700 years. And this increase of colonial trade was not at the expence of the general trade of the kingdom, for that increased in the fame time, from fix millions to fixteen millions.

In this auspicious period the Mother Country contented herself with exercising her supremacy in superintending the general concerns of the colonies, and in harmonising the commercial interest of the whole empire. To this the most of them bowed down with such a silial submission as demonstrated that they, though not subjected to parliamentary taxes, could be kept in due subordination, and in persect subserviency to the grand views of

colonifation.

Immediately after the peace of Paris, 1763, a new fcene was opened. The national debt of Great-Britain then

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then amounted to 148 millions, for which an interest of nearly 5 millions was annually paid. While the British minister was digesting plans for diminishing this amazing oad of debt, he conceived the idea of raising a substanial revenue in the British colonies, from taxes laid by the parliament of the parent state. On the one hand it was preed that the late war originated on account of the colonies—that it was reasonable, more especially as it had terminated in a manner so favourable to their interest, that they should contribute to the defraying of the exbences it had occasioned. Thus far both parties were agreed, but Great-Britain contended that her parliament as the supreme power, was constitutionally vested with m authority to lay them on every part of the empire. This doctrine, plaufible in itself, and conformable to the letter of the British constitution, when the whole dominions were represented in one affembly, was reprobated in the colonies as contrary to the spirit of the same government, when the empire became fo far extended, se to have many distinct representative affemblies. The colonists believed that the chief excellence of the British constitution consisted in the right of the subjects to grant, or withhold taxes, and in their having a share in enacting the laws by which they were to be bound.

They conceived that the superiority of the British confitution, to other forms of government was, not because their supreme council was called a Parliament, but because the people had a share in it, by appointing members who constituted one of its constituent branches, and without whose concurrence no law binding on them, could be enacted. In the Mother Country it was afferted to be effential to the unity of the empire, that the Britilh Parliament should have a right of taxation, over every part of the royal dominions. In the colonies it was believed, that taxation and representation were inseparable, and that they could neither be free nor happy, if their property could be taken from them, without their consent. The common people in America reafoned on this subject in a summary way: " If a British Parliament," faid they, in which we are unrepresented, and over which we have no controul, can take from us any part of our property, by direct taxation, they may take as much as they please, and we have no security for any thing that remains, but a forbearance on their part, less likely to be exercised in our favour, as they lighten themfelves

themselves of the burthens of government, in the same proportion that they impose them on us." They well knew that communities of mankind, as well as individuals, have a strong propensity to impose on others, when they can do it with impunity, and especially when there is a prospect that the imposition will be attended with advantage to themselves. The Americans, from that jealoufy of their liberties which their local fituation nurtured, and which they inherited from their forefathers, viewed the exclusive right of laying taxes on themselves, free from extraneous influence, in the fame light as the British Parliament views its peculiar privilege of raising money independent of the crown. The parent frate appeared to the colonists to stand in the same relation to their local legislatures, as the monarch of Great-Britain to the British Parliament. His prerogative is limited by that palladium of the people's liberty, the exclusive privilege of granting their own money. While this right rests in the hands of the people, their liberties are fecured. In the fame manner reasoned the colonists, " in order to be stiled freemen, our local affemblies, elected by ourselves, must enjoy the exclusive privilege of imposing taxes upon us." They contended, that men fettled in foreign parts to better their condition, and not to submit their liberties -to continue the equals, not to become the flave of their lefs adventurous fellowcitizens, and that by the novel doctrine of parliamentary power, they were degraded from being the subjects of a King, to the low condition of being subjects of subjects. They argued that it was effentially involved in the idea of property, that the possessor had such a right therein, that it was a contradiction to suppose any other man, or body of men, possessed a right to take it from him without his confent. Precedents in the history of England, justified this mode of reasoning. The love of property strengthened it, and it had a peculiar force on the minds of colonists, 3000 miles removed from the feat of government, and growing up to maturity, in a new world, where, from the extent of country, and the state of society, even the necessary restraints of civil government, were impatiently borne. On the other hand, the people of Great-Britain, revolted against the claims of the colonists. Educated in habits of submilfion to parliamentary taxation, they conceived it to be the height of contumacy for their colonists to refule obedience

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obedience to the power which they had been taught to revere. Not adverting to the common interest, which existed between the people of Great-Britain, and their representatives, they believed that the same right existed. although the same community of interests was wanting. The pride of an opulent conquering nation, aided this mode of reasoning. "What," said they, " shall we, who have so lately humbled France and Spain, be dictated to by our own colonists? Shall our subjects, educated by our care, and defended by our arms, prefume to question the rights of Parliament, to which we are obliged to fubmit." Reflections of this kind, congenial to the natural vanity of the human heart, operated fo extensively, that the people of Great-Britain spoke of their colonies and of their colonists, as of a kind of possession annexed to their persons. The love of power, and of property, on the one fide of the Atlantic, were opposed by the fame powerful paffions on the other.

The disposition to tax the colonies was also strengthened by exaggerated accounts of their wealth. It was faid, " that the American planters lived in affluence, and with inconfiderable taxes, while the inhabitants of Great-Britain were borne down by fuch oppreffive burdens, as to make a bare sublistence, a matter of extreme difficulty." The officers who have ferved in America during the late war, contributed to this delufion. observations were founded on what they had seen in cities, and at a time when large fums were fpent by government, in support of fleets and armies, and when American commodities were in great demand. To treat with attention, those who came to fight for them, and also to gratify their own pride, the colonists had made a parade of their riches, by frequently and fumptuously entertaining the gentlemen of the British army. These judging from what they faw, without confidering the general state of the country, concurred in representing the colonists as very able to contribute argely towards defraying the common expences of the empire.

The charters which were supposed to contain the principles on which the colonies were founded, became the subject of serious investigation on both sides. One clause was found to run through the whole of them, except that which had been granted to Mr. Penn. This was a declaration, "that the emigrants to America should enjoy the same privileges as if they had remained, or had

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been born within the realm;" but fuch was the fubility of disputants, that both parties construed this general principle, fo as to favour their respective opinions. The American patriots contended, that as English freeholders could not be taxed but by representatives, in choosing whom, they had a vote, neither could the colonists: But it was replied, that if the colonists had remained in England, they must have been bound to pay the taxes, imposed by parliament. It was therefore inferred that, though taxed by that authority, they loft none of the rights of native Englishmen residing at home. The partizans of the Mother Country could fee nothing in charters but fecurity against taxes, by royal authority. Americans adhering to the spirit more than to the letter, viewed their charters as a shield against all taxes, not imposed by representatives of their own choice. construction they contended to be expressly recognized by the charter of Maryland. In that King Charles bound both himself and his successors, not to affent to any bill, subjecting the inhabitants to internal taxation, by external legislation.

The nature and extent of the connection between Great-Britain and America, was a great conftitutional question, involving many interests, and the general principles of civil liberty. To decide this, recourse was in vain had to parchment authorities, made at a distant time, when neither the grantor, nor grantees of American territory, had in contemplation any thing like the present

state of the two countries.

Great and flourishing colonies daily increasing in numbers, and already grown to the magnitude of a nation, planted at an immense distance, and governed by constitutions refembling that of the country from which they forung, were novelties in the history of the world. combine colonies fo circumstanced, in one uniform fystem of government with the parent state, required a great knowledge of mankind, and an extensive comprehension of things. It was an arduous business, far beyond the grasp of ordinary statesmen, whose minds were narrowed by the formalities of law, or the trammels of office. original genius unfettered with precedents, and exalted with just ideas of the rights of human nature, and the obligations of univerfal benevolence, might have struck out a middle line which would have fecured as much liberty to the colonies, and as great a degree of supremacy

to the parent state, as their common good required: But the helm of Great-Britain was not in such hands. foirit of the British constitution on the one hand, revolted at the idea that the British Parliament should exercise the ame unlimited authority over the unrepresented colonies, which it exercised over the inhabitants of Great-Britain. The colonists on the other hand did not claim a total exemption from its authority. They in general allowed the Mother Country, a certain undefined prerogative over them, and acquiesced in the right of Parliament, to make many acts binding them in many subjects of internal policy, and regulating their trade. Where parliamentary supremacy ended, and at what point colonial independency began, was not afcertained. Happy would it have been, had the question never been agitated, but much more fo, had it been compromifed by an amicable compact, without the horrors of a civil war.

The English colonies were originally established, not for the sake of revenue, but on the principles of a commercial monopoly. While England pursued trade and forgot revenue, her commerce encreased at least fourfold. The colonies took off the manufactures of Great-Britain, and paid for them with provisions or raw materials. They united their arms in war, their commerce and their councils in peace, without nicely investigating the terms on which the connection of the two countries de-

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A perfect calm in the political world is not long to be expected. The reciprocal happiness both of Great-Britain and of the colonies, was too great to be of long duration. The calamities of the war of 1755, had scarcely ended, when the germ of another war was planted, which

foon grew up and produced deadly fruits.

At that time fundry resolutions passed the British parliament relative to the imposition of a stamp duty in America, which gave a general alarm. By them the right, the equity, the policy, and even the necessity of taxing the colonies was formally avowed. These resolutions being considered as the presace of a system of American revenue, were deemed an introduction to evils of much greater magnitude. They opened a prospect of oppression, boundless in extent, and endless in duration. They were nevertheless not immediately followed by any legislative act. Time and an invitation were given to the Americans, to suggest any other mode of taxation, that Vol. I.

1764.

might be equivalent in its produce to the stamp act: But they objected, not only to the mode, but the principle, and feveral of their affemblies, though in vain, petitioned against it. An American revenue was in England very popular measure. The cry in favour of it was fo ftrong, as to confound and filence the voice of petitions to the contrary. The equity of compelling the Americans to contribute to the common expences of the em. pire, fatisfied many, who, without enquiring into the policy or justice of taxing their unrepresented fellow fub jects, readily affented to the measures adopted by the parliament for this purpose. The prospect of easing their own burthens at the expence of the colonists, dazzled the eyes of gentlemen of landed interest, so as to keep out of their view the probable confequences of the innovation.

The omnipotence of parliament was fo familiar a phrake on both fides of the Atlantic, that few in America, and still fewer in Great-Britain were impressed in the first instance with any idea of the illegality of taxing the colonists.

The illumination on that fubject was gradual. The

resolutions in favour of an American stamp act, which

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passed in March, 1764, met with no opposition. In the course of the year which intervened between these resolutions and the passing of a law grounded upon them, the fubject was better understood, and constitutional objections against the measure, were urged by several both in Great-Britain and America. This aftonished and chagrined the British ministry: But as the principle of taxing America had been for fome time determined upon, they were unwilling to give it up. Impelled by par-March, tiality for a long cherished idea, Mr. Grenville brought 1765. into the house of commons his long expected bill for laying a stamp duty in America. By this, after passing through the usual forms, it was enacted, that the infirmments of writing which are in daily use among a commercial people, should be null and void, unless they were executed on stamped paper or parchment, charged with a duty imposed by the British parliament.

When the bill was brought in, Mr. Charles Townsend concluded a speech in its favour, with words to the following effect, "And now will these Americans, children planted by our care, nourished up by our indulgence, till they are grown to a degree of strength and opulence, and

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and protected by our arms, will they grudge to contribute their mite to relieve us from the heavy weight of that burthen which we lie under." To which Colonel Barré replied "They planted by your care? No, your oppressions planted them in America. They fled from tyranny to a then uncultivated and unhospitable country, where they exposed themselves to almost all the hardships to which human nature is liable; and among others to the cruelty of a favage foe, the most subtle, and I will take upon me to fay, the most formidable of any people upon the face of God's earth; and yet, actuated by principles of true English liberty, they met all hardships with pleasure compared with those they suffered in their own country, from the hands of those that should have been their friends. They nourished up by your indulgence? They grew by your neglect of them. As foon as you began to care about them, that care was exercised in sending persons to rule them in one department and another, who were perhaps the deputies of deputies to fome members of this house, fent to fpy out their liberties, to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon them—Men whose behaviour on many occasions has caused the blood of those sons of liberty to recoil within them-Men promoted to the highest seats of justice, fome, who, to my knowledge were glad by going to a foreign country, to escape being brought to the bar of court of justice in their own.—They, protected by your arms? They have nobly taken up arms in your defence, have exerted a valour amidst their constant and laborious industry, for the defence of a country whose frontier was drenched in blood, while its interior parts yielded all its little favings to your emolument. And believe me, remember I this day told you fo, that same spirit of freedom which actuated that people at first, will accompany them still: but prudence forbids me to explain myfelf farther. God knows, I do not at this time speak from any motives of party heat, what I deliver are the genuine sentiments of my heart. However superior to me in general knowledge and experience, the respectable body of this house may be, yet I claim to know more of America than most of you, having seen and been conversant in that country. The people I believe are as truly loyal as any fubjects the king has, but a people jealous of their liberties, and who will vindicate them, if ever they should be violated: but the subject is too delicate-I will fay no more." E 2 During

During the debate on the bill, the supporters of it in fifted much on the colonies being virtually represented in the fame manner as Leeds, Halifax, and some other towns were. A recurrence to this plea was a virtual acknow. ledgment that there ought not to be taxation without representation. It was replied, that the connection be tween the electors and non-electors, of parliament in Great-Britain was fo interwoven, from both being equally hable to pay the fame common tax, as to give fome feet rity of property to the latter; but with respect to taxe laid by the British parliament, and paid by the Americans the fituation of the parties was reversed. Instead of both parties bearing a proportionable share of the same common burden, what was laid on the one, was exactly fo mud taken off from the other. diad yan

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The bill met with no opposition in the house of Lords, and on the 22d of March, it received the royal affent The night after it paffed, Dr. Franklin wrote to Mr. Ch. Thomson. "The fun of liberty is fet, you must light up the candles of industry and economy." Mr. Thom fon answered, " he was apprehensive that other light would be the confequence," and foretold the opposition that shortly took place. On its being suggested from an thority, that the stamp officers would not be fent from Great-Britain: but selected from among the American the colony agents were defired to point out proper pafons for the purpole. They generally nominated the friends, which affords a presumptive proof that they sup posed the act would have gone down. In this opinion the were far from being fingular. That the colonists wou be ultimately obliged to fubmit to the stamp act, at first commonly believed both in England and Ame rica. The framers of it in particular, flattered then felves that the confusion which would arise upon the difuse of writings, and the insecurity of property, which would refult from using any other than that require by law, would compel the colonies, however reluctu to use the stamp paper, and consequently to pay the taxes imposed thereon. They therefore boasted that was a law which would execute itself. By the terms the stamp act, it was not to take effect till the first de of November, a period of more than feven months after its paffing. This gave the colonists an opportunity to leifurely canvaffing the new fubject, and examining it ful on every fide. In the first part of this interval, struct

with aftonishment, they lay in filent consternation, and could not determine what course to pursue. By degrees they recovered their recollection. Virginia led the way May 28, in opposition to the stamp act. Mr. Patrick Henry brought 1765. into the house of burgesses of that colony, the following

resolutions which were substantially adopted.

Refolved, That the first adventurers, settlers of this his Majesty's colony and dominion of Virginia, brought with them and transmitted to their posterity, and all other his Majesty's subjects, since inhabiting in this his Majesty's said colony, all the liberties, privileges and immunities that have at any time been held, enjoyed and possessed by the people of Great-Britain.

Refolved, That by two royal charters granted by King James the first, the colonies aforesaid are declared and entitled to all liberties, privileges and immunities of denizens, and natural subjects, to all intents and purposes, as if they had been abiding, and born within the realm of

England.

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Refolved, That his Majesty's liege people, of this, his ancient colony, have enjoyed the rights of being thus governed by their own assembly, in the article of taxes and internal police, and that the same have never been forfeited, or yielded up, but have been constantly recognized by

the King and people of Britain.

Refolved, therefore, That the general affembly of this colony, together with his Majesty or his substitutes, have in their representative capacity, the only exclusive right and power to lay taxes and imposts upon the inhabitants of this colony, and that every attempt to vest such power in any other person or persons whatsoever, than the general assembly aforesaid, is illegal, unconstitutional and unjust, and hath a manifest tendency to destroy British, as well as American Liberty.

Resolved that his Majesty's liege people, the inhabitants of this colony are not bound to yield obedience to any law or ordinance whatever, designed to impose any taxation whatever upon them, other than the laws or ordinances

of the general affembly aforesaid.

Refolved, That any person who shall, by speaking or writing, affert or maintain that any person or persons, other than the general assembly of this colony, have any right or power to impose, or lay any taxation on the people here, shall be deemed an enemy to this his Majesty's colony.

1769.

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Upon reading these resolutions, the boldness and me velty of them affected one of the members to fuch a degree, that he cried out, "Treason! Treason!" the were, nevertheless, well received by the people, and immediately forwarded to the other provinces. They cir. culated extensively, and gave a spring to all the discontented. Till they appeared, most were of opinion the the act would be quietly adopted. Murmurs indeed were common, but they feemed to be fuch as would foon de The countenance of fo respectable a colony, a Virginia, confirmed the wavering, and emboldened the timid. Opposition to the stamp act from that period affumed a bolder face. The fire of liberty blazed forth from the press; some well judged publications set the rights of the colonists in a plain but strong point of view. The tongues and the pens of the well informed citizens laboured in kindling the latent sparks of patriotifm. The flame spread from breast to breast, till the conflagration became general. In this business New-England had a principal share. The inhabitants of that part of America in particular, confidered their obligations to the Mother Country for past favours, to be very inconfiderable. They were fully informed that their forefathers were driven by perfecution to the woods of America, and had there, without any expence to the parent state, effected a settlement, amidst rude creation Their refentment for the invasion of their accustomed right of taxation, was not fo much mitigated by the recollection of late favours, as it was heightened by the tradition of grievous fufferings, to which their ancestor, by the rulers of England had been subjected. The descendants of the exiled, persecuted Puritans of the last century, opposed the stamp act with the same spirit with which their forefathers were actuated, when they it themselves against the arbitrary impositions of the House of Stuart.

The heavy burdens which the operation of the stamp act would have imposed on the colonists, together with the precedent it would establish of future exactions, furnished the American patriots with arguments calculated as well to move the passions, as to convince the judgments of their fellow colonists. In great warmth they exclaimed, "If the parliament has a right to levy the stamp duties, they may, by the same authority, lay on us imposts, excises, and other taxes without end, till their rapacity

1765

cannot at future elections displace these men who so lavishly grant away our property. Their seats and their power are independent of us, and it will rest with their generosity where to stop, in transferring the expences

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of government from their own, to our shoulders." It was fortunate for the liberties of America, that News-papers were the subject of a heavy stamp duty. Printers when uninfluenced by government, have generally arranged themselves on the side of liberty, nor are they less remarkable for attention to the profits of their profession. A stamp duty which openly invaded the first and threatened a great diminution of the last, provoked their united zealous opposition. They daily presented to the public original differtations, tending to prove that if the stamp act was suffered to operate, the liberties of America were at an end, and their property virtually transferred to their Trans-Atlantic fellow-subjects. The writers among the Americans, feriously alarmed for the fate of their country, came forward with effays to prove that agreeably to the British constitution, taxation and reprefentation were inseparable, that the only constitutional mode of raising money from the colonists was by acts of their own Legislatures, that the Crown possessed no farther power than that of requisition, and that the parliamentary right of taxation was confined to the Mother Country, and there originated from the natural right of man to do what he pleafed with his own, transferred by consent from the electors of Great-Britain to those whom they chose to represent them in Parliament. They also infifted much on the mif-application of public-money by the British ministry. Great pains were taken to inform the colonists of the large fums annually bestowed on penfioned favourites, and for the various purposes of bribery. Their paffions were inflamed by high coloured representations of the hardship of being obliged to pay the earnings of their industry into a British treasury, well known to be a fund for corruption.

The writers on the American fide were opposed by arguments drawn from the unity of the empire, the necessity of one supreme head, the unlimited power of Parliament, and the great numbers in the Mother Country, who, though legally disqualified from voting at elections, were nevertheless bound to pay the taxes imposed by the representatives of the nation. To these objections it was

replied,

1765.

replied, that the very idea of subordination of parts, excluded the notion of simple undivided unity. That as England was the head, she could not be the head and the members too-that in all extensive empires where the dead uniformity of servitude did not prevent, the subordinate parts had many local privileges and immunities-that between these privileges and the supreme common authority, the line was extremely nice; but neverthelefs, the fupremacy of the head had an ample field of exercise, without arrogating to itself the disposal of the property of the unrepresented subordinate parts. To the affertion that the power of Parliament was unlimited, the colonists replied. that before it could constitutionally exercise that power, it must be constitutionally formed, and that, therefore, it must at least, in one of its branches, be constituted by the people over whom it exercised unlimited power. with respect to Great-Britain, it was so constituted, -with respect to America, it was not. They therefore inferred that its power ought not to be the same over both countries, They argued also, that the delegation of the people was the fource of power in regard to taxation, and as that delegation was wanting in America, they concluded the right of Parliament to grant away their property, could not exist. That the defective representation in Great-Britain, should be urged as an argument for taxing the Americans, without any reprefentation at all, proved the encroaching nature of power.—Inflead of convincing the colonists of the propriety of their submission, it demonstrated the wisdom of their resistance; for said they, " one invasion of natural right is made the justification of another, much more injurious and oppressive."

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The advocates for parliamentary taxation laid great fires on the rights supposed to accrue to Great-Britain, on the score of her having reared up and protected the English settlements in America, at great expence. It was on the other hand, contended by the colonists, that in all the wars which were common to both countries, they had taken their full share, but in all their own dangers, in all the difficulties belonging separately to their situation, which did not immediately concern Great-Britain, they were left to themselves, and had to struggle through a hard infancy; and in particular, to defend themselves without any aid from the Parent State, against the numerous savages in their vicinity. That when France had made war upon them, it was not on their own account, but as appendages to Great-Britain.—That confining their trade

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ade for for the exclusive benefit of the Parent State, was an am- 1765. ple compensation for her protection, and a sufficient equivalent for their exemption from parliamentary taxation. That the taxes imposed on the inhabitants of Great Britain, were incorporated with their manufacturers, and ultimately fell on the colonists, who were the confumers.

The advocates for the flamp act, also contended that as the parliament was charged with the defence of the colonies, it ought to possess the means of defraying the expences incurred thereby. The fame argument had been used by King Charles the 1st, in support of thip money; and it was now answered in the same manner, as it was by the patriots of that day, " That the people who were defended or protected, were the fittest to judge of and to provide the means of defraying the expences incurred on that account." In the mean time, the minds of the Americans underwent a total transformation. flead of their late peaceable and fleady attachment to the British nation, they were daily advancing to the oppofite extreme. A new mode of displaying refentment against the friends of the stamp act, began in Massachufetts, and was followed by the other colonies. A few gentlemen hung out, early in the morning, on the limb of a large tree, towards the entrance of Boston, two effigies, one designed for the stamp master, the other for a Aug. 14. jack boot, with the head and horns peeping out at the top. Great numbers both from town and country came to fee them. A spirit of enthusiasm was diffused among the spectators. In the evening the whole was cut down and carried in procession by the populace shouting "liberty and property for ever, no stamps." They next pulled down a new building, lately erected by Mr. Oliver, the They then went to his house, before stamp master. which they beheaded his effigy, and at the same time broke his windows. Eleven days after fimilar violences were repeated. The mob attacked the house of Mr. William Story, deputy register of the court of admiralty, -broke his windows-forced into his dwelling house, and destroyed the books and files belonging to the faid court, and ruined a great part of his furniture. next proceeded to the house of Benjamin Hallowel, comptroller of the customs, and repeated fimilar excesses, and drank and destroyed his liquors. They afterwards proceeded to the house of Mr. Hutchinson, and soon demolished

1765.

Nov. I.

molished it. They carried off his plate, furniture and apparel, and scattered or destroyed manuscripts and other curious and useful papers which for thirty years he had been collecting. About half a dozen of the meanest of the mob were soon after taken up and committed, but they either broke jail, or otherwise escaped all punishment. The town of Boston condemned the whole proceeding, and for some time, private gentlemen kept watch

at night, to prevent further violences.

Similar disturbances broke out in the adjacent colonies, nearly about the same time. On the 27th August, the people of New Port in Rhode-Island, exhibited three effigies intended for Messieurs Howard, Mossatt, and Johnson, in a cart with halters about their necks, and after hanging them on a gallows for some time, cut them down and burnt them, amidst the acclamations of thousands. On the day following, the people collected at the house of Mr. Martin Howard, a lawyer, who had written in defence of the right of Parliament to tax the Americans, and demolished every thing that belonged to it. They proceeded to Dr. Mossatt's, who, in conversation, had supported the same right, and made a similar devastation of his property.

In Connecticut they exhibited effigies in fundry places,

1765. and afterwards committed them to the flames.

In New-York, the stamp master having resigned, the stamp papers were taken into Fort George, by Lieutenant Governor Colden. The people, difliking his political fentiments, broke open his stable, took out his coach, and carried it in triumph, through the principal streets, to the gallows. On one end of this they suspended the effigy of the Lieut. Governor, having in his right hand a framped bill of lading, and in the other a figure of the devil. After some time, they carried the apparatus to the gate of the fort, and from thence to the bowling green, under the muzzles of the guns, and burned the whole amid the acclamations of many thousands. They went thence to Major James' house, stripped it of every article, and confumed the whole, because he was a friend to the stamp act.

The next evening the mob re-affembled, and infifted upon the Lieutenant Governor delivering the stamped papers into their hands, and threatened, in case of a refusal, to take them by force. After some negociation, it was agreed that they should be delivered to the corpora-

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tion, and they were deposited in the city hall. Ten boxes of the fame, which came by another conveyance, were burned.

The stamp-act was not less odious to many of the inhabitants of the British West-India islands, than to those on the continent of North America. The people of St. Kitts obliged the stamp-officer, and his deputy, to refign. Barbadoes, Canada, and Halifax, submitted to the act.

When the ship, which brought the stamp papers to Philadelphia, first appeared round Gloucester point, all the veffels in the harbour hoifted their colours half mast high. The bells were rung muffled till evening, and every countenance added to the appearance of fincere mourning. A large number of people affembled, and endeavoured to procure the refignation of Mr. Hughes, the stamp distributer. He held out long, but at length found

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As opportunities offered, the affemblies generally paffed resolutions, afferting their exclusive right, to lay taxes on their constituents. The people, in their town meetings, instructed their representatives to oppose the stamp-act. As a specimen of these, the instructions given to Thomas Forster, their representative, by the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town of Plymouth, are subjoined. In these the yeomanry of the country spoke the determined October language of freemen. After expressing the highest esteem for the British constitution, and setting forth their griev-

ances, they proceeded as follows:

"You, Sir, represent a people, who are not only defcended from the first fettlers of this country, but inhabit the very spot they first possessed. Here was first laid the foundation of the British empire, in this part of America, which, from a very small beginning, has encreafed and fpread, in a manner very furprifing, and almost incredible, especially when we consider, that all this has been effected, without the aid or affiftance of any power on earth; that we have defended, protected and secured ourselves against the invasions and cruelty of savages, and the subtlety and inhumanity of our inveterate and natural enemies, the French; and all this without the appropriation of any tax by stamps, or stamp acts, laid upon our fellow subjects, in part of the King's dominions, for defraying the expence thereof. This place, Sir, was at first the asylum of liberty, and we hope, will ever be preferved facred to it, though it was then no more than a barren

barren wilderness, inhabited only by favage men and beafts. To this place our Fathers (whose memories be revered) possessed of the principles of liberty in their purity, disdaining slavery, fled to enjoy those privileges, which they had an undoubted right to, but were deprived of, by the hands of violence and op. pression, in their native country. We, Sir, their posterity, the freeholders, and other inhabitants of this town, legally affembled for that purpose, possessed of the same fentiments, and retaining the fame ardour for liberty, think it our indespensable duty, on this occasion, to express to you these our fentiments of the stamp-act, and its fatal confequences to this country, and to enjoin upon you, as you regard not only the welfare, but the very being of this people, that you (confiftent with our allegiance to the King, and relation to the government of Great-Britain) difregarding all propofals for that purpose, exert all your power and influence in oppofition to the stamp-act, at least till we hear the success of our petitions for relief. We likewise, to avoid difgracing the memories of our ancestors, as well as the reproaches of our own consciences, and the curses of posterity, recommend it to you, to obtain, if possible, in the hon. house of representatives of this province, a full and explicit affertion of our rights, and to have the fame entered on their public records, that all generations yet to come, may be convinced, that we have not only a just fense of our rights and liberties, but that we never, with fubmission to Divine Providence, will be slaves to any power on earth."

1765.

The expediency of calling a Continental Congress to June 6. be composed of deputies from each of the provinces, had early occurred to the people of Massachusetts. The affembly of that province paffed a refolution in favour of that measure, and fixed on New-York as the place, and the fecond Tuesday of October, as the time, for holding the fame. Soon after, they fent circular letters to the speakers of the several affemblies, requesting their This first advance towards continental concurrence. union was seconded in South-Carolina, before it had been agreed to by any colony to the Southward of New-England. The example of this province had a confiderable influence in recommending the measure to others, who were divided in their opinions, on the propriety of it.

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The Affemblies of Virginia, North-Carolina, and Georgia, were prevented, by their governors, from fending a deputation to this Congress. Twenty-eight deputies from Maffachufetts, Rhode-Island, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and South-Carolina met at New-York; and after mature deliberation agreed on a declaration of their rights, and on a statement of their grievances. They afferted in ftrong terms, their exemption from all taxes not imposed by their own representatives. They also concurred in a petition to the King, and memorial to the House of Lords, and a petition to the House of Commons. The colonies that were prevented from fending their representatives to this Congress, forwarded petitions similar to those which were adopted by the deputies which attended.

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While a variety of legal and illegal methods were adopted to oppose the stamp act, the first of November, on which it was to commence its operation, approached. This in Boston was ushered in by a funeral tolling of bells. Many shops and stores were shut. The efficies of the planners and friends of the stamp act were carried about the streets in public derision, and then torn in pieces by the enraged populace. It was remarkable that though a large crowd was assembled, there was not the least violence or disorder.

At Portsmouth in New-Hampshire, the morning was Nov. 1. uthered in with tolling all the bells in town. In the course of the day, notice was given to the friends of liberty, to attend her funeral. A coffin neatly ornamented inscribed with the word Liberty in large letters, was carried to the grave. The funeral procession began from the state-house, attended with two unbraced drums. While the inhabitants who followed the coffin were in motion, minute guns were fired, and continued till the corple arrived at the place of interment. Then an oration in favour of the deceased was pronounced. It was fcarcely ended before the corpfe was taken up, it having been perceived that some remains of life were left, at which the inscription was immediately altered to " Liberty revived." The bells immediately exchanged their melancholy, for a more joyful found, and fatisfaction appeared in every countenance. The whole was conducted with decency, and without injury or infult to any man's perion or property.

In Maryland, the effigy of the stamp master, on one side of which was written, "Tyranny," on the other "Oppression," and across the breast, "Damn my country I'll get money," was carried through the streets, from the place of confinement to the whipping post, and from thence to the pillory. After suffering many indignities, it

was first hanged and then burnt.

The general aversion to the stamp act was, by similar methods, in a variety of places demonstrated. It is remarkable, that the proceedings of the populace on these occasions, were carried on with decorum and regularity. They were not ebullitions of a thoughtless mob, but for the most part planned by leading men of character and influence, who were friends to peace and order. These, knowing well that the bulk of mankind are more led by their senses, than by their reason, conducted the public exhibitions on that principle, with a view of making the stamp act and its friends, both ridiculous and odious.

1765.

Though the stamp act was to have operated from the first of November; yet legal proceedings in the courts, were carried on as before. Veffels entered and departed without stamped papers. The printers boldly printed and circulated their news-papers, and found a sufficient number of readers, though they used common paper in defiance of the act of parliament. In most departments, by common confent, bufiness was carried on as though no ftamp act had existed. This was accompanied by spirited resolutions to risque all consequences, rather than submit to use the paper required by law. While these matters were in agitation, the colonists entered into affociations against importing British manufactures, till the stamp act should be repealed. In this manner British liberty was made to operate against British tyranny. Agreeably to the free conflitution of Great-Britain, the subject was at liberty to buy, or not to buy, as he pleased. By fuspending their future purchases till the repeal of the stamp act, the colonists made it the interest of merchants and manufacturers to folicit for that repeal. They had usually taken off so great a proportion of British manufactures, that the sudden stoppage of all their orders, amounting annually, to feveral millions sterling, threw some thousands in the Mother Country out of employment, and induced them, from a regard to their own interest, to advocate the measures wished for by America. The petitions from the colonies were feconded by petitions

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from the merchants and manufacturers of Great-Britain. What the former prayed for as a matter of right, and connected with their liberties, the latter also solicited from motives of immediate advantage. In order to remedy the deficiency of British goods, the colonists betook themselves to a variety of necessary domestic manufactures. In a little time, large quantities of coarse and common cloaths were brought to market, and these though dearer, and of a worse quality, were chearfully preferred to fimilar articles imported from Britain. wool might not be wanting, they entered into refolutions to abstain from eating lambs. Foreign elegancies were generally laid afide. The women were as exemplary as the men, in various instances of self denial. With great readiness they refused every article of decoration for their persons, and of luxury for their tables. These refrictions which the colonists had voluntarily imposed on themselves, were so well observed, that multitudes of artificers in England, were reduced to great diffress, and fome of their most flourishing manufactories were, in a great measure at a stand. An affociation was entered into by many of the fons of liberty, the name given to those who were opposed to the stamp act, by which they agreed "to march with the utmost expedition at their own proper costs and expence, with their whole force to the relief of those that should be in danger from the stamp act, or its promoters and abettors, or any thing relative to it, on account of any thing that may have been done in opposition to its obtaining." This was subscribed by fo many in New-York and New-England, that nothing but a repeal could have prevented the immediate commencement of a civil war.

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From the decided opposition to the stamp act, which had been adopted by the colonies, it became necessary for Great-Britain to enforce or to repeal it. Both methods of proceeding had supporters. The opposers of a repeal urged arguments, drawn from the dignity of the nation, the danger of giving way to the clamours of the Americans, and the consequences of weakening parliamentary authority over the colonies. On the other hand it was evident, from the determined opposition of the colonies, that it could not be enforced without a civil war, by which, in every event, the nation must be a loser. In the course of these discussions, Dr. Franklin was examined at the bar of the House of Commons, and gave extensive

extensive information on the state of American affair and the impolicy of the stamp act, which contributed, much to remove prejudices, and to produce a disposition

that was friendly to a repeal.

Some speakers of great weight in both houses of parliament, denied their right of taxing the colonies. The most distinguished supporters of this opinion were Lord Camden, in the House of Peers, and Mr. Pitt in the House of Commons. The former, in strong language, faid, "My position is this, I repeat it, I will maintain it to my last hour. Taxation and representation are inseparable. This polition is founded on the laws of nature. It is more, it is itself an eternal law of nature. For whatever is a man's own, is absolutely his own. No man has a right to take it from him without his confent. Whoever attempts to do it, attempts an injury, whoever does it, commits a robbery." Mr. Pitt, with an original boldness of expresfion, justified the colonists, in opposing the stamp act. "You have no right," faid he, " to tax America. I rejoice that America has refifted. Three millions of our fellow subjects so lost to every sense of virtue, as tamely to give up their liberties, would be fit inftruments to make flaves of the rest. He concluded with giving his advice, that the stamp act be repealed absolutely, totally, and immediately, that the reason for the repeal be assigned, that it was founded on an erroneous principle. St. At the fame time," faid he, " let the fovereign authority of this country over the colonies, be afferted in as strong terms as can be devised, and be made to extend to every point of legillation whatfoever; that we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exercise every power, except that of taking their money out of their pockets, without their confent." The approbation of this illustrious statesman, whose distinguished abilities had raised Great-Britain to the highest pitch of renown, inspired the Americans with additional confidence in the rectitude of their claims of exemption from parliamentary taxation, and emboldened them to farther opposition, when at a future day, as shall be hereafter related, the project of an American revenue was refumed. After much debating, and two protests in the House of Lords, and passing an act " for securing the dependence of America on Great-Britain" the repeal of March the stamp act was finally carried. This event gave great joy in London. Ships in the river Thames difplayed their colours, and houses were illuminated al over

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than the colonists rescinded their resolutions, and recommenced their mercantile intercourse with the Mother Country. They presented their homespun clothes to the poor, and imported more largely than ever. The churches resounded with thanksgivings, and their public and private rejoicings knew no bounds. By letters, addresses, and other means, almost all the colonies shewed unequivocal marks of acknowledgment and gratitude. So studen a calm recovered after so violent a storm, is without a parallel in history. By the judicious facrisice of one law, the parliament of Great-Britain procured an acquiescence in all that remained.

There were enlightened patriots, fully impressed with an idea that the immoderate joy of the colonists was dispro-

portioned to the advantage they had gained.

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The stamp act, though repealed, was not repealed on American principles. The preamble affigned as the reafon thereof, " That the collecting the feveral duties and tevenues, as by the faid act was directed, would be attended with many inconveniencies, and productive of consequences dangerous to the commercial interests of these kingdoms." Though this reason was a good one in England, it was by no means fatisfactory in America. At the same time that the stamp act was repealed, the abfolute unlimited supremacy of parliament, was, in words, afferted. The opposers of the repeal contended for this as effential, the friends of that measure acquiesced in it to strengthen their party, and make fure of their object. Many on both fides thought, that the dighity of Great-Britain required fomething of the kind to counterbalance the loss of authority, that might result from her yield-The act for this ing to the clamours of the colonists. purpose was called the declaratory act, and was in principle more hostile to American rights, than the stamp act; for it annulled those resolutions and acts of the provincial affemblies, in which they had afferted their fight to exemption from all taxes not imposed by their own representatives; and also enacted, " That the parliament had, and of right ought to have, power to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever."

The bulk of the Americans, intoxicated with the advantage they had gained, overlooked this statute, which in one comprehensive sentence, not only deprived them of liberty and property, but of every right incident to Vol. I.

humanity. They confidered it as a falvo for the honor of parliament, in repealing an act which had so lately received their fanction, and flattered themselves it would remain a dead letter, and that although the right of taxation was in words retained, it would never be exercised. Unwilling to contend about paper claims of ideal supremacy, they returned to their habits of good humour

with the parent state.

The repeal of the stamp act in a relative connection with all its circumstances and consequences, was the first direct step to American independency. The claims of the two countries were not only left undecided, but a foundation was laid for their extending at a future period to the impossibility of a compromise. Though for the present, Great-Britain receded from enforcing her claim of American revenue, a numerous party adhering to that system, reserved themselves for more favourable circumstances to enforce it; and at the same time the colonists more enlightened on the subject, and more fully convinced of the rectitude of their claims, were encouraged to oppose it under whatsoever form it should appear, or under whatsoever disguise it should cover itself.

Elevated with the advantage they had gained from that day forward, instead of feeling themselves dependent on Great-Britain, they conceived that in respect to commerce, she was dependent on them. It inspired them with such high ideas of the importance of their trade, that they considered the Mother Country to be brought under greater obligations to them, for purchasing her manufactures, than they were to her for protection and the administration of civil government. The freemen of British America, impressed with the exalting sentiments of patriotism and of liberty, conceived it to be within their power, by suture combinations, at any time to convulse, if not, to bankrupt the nation from which

they fprung.

Opinions of this kind were strengthened by their local situation, savouring ideas as extensive as the unexplored continent of which they were inhabitants. While the pride of Britons revolted at the thought of their colonies resusing subjection to that parliament which they obeyed, the Americans with equal haughtiness exclaimed, "shall the petty island of Great-Britain, scarce a speck on the map of the world, controul the free citizens of the great

continent of America?"

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These high sounding pretensions would have been harmless, or at most spent themselves in words, had not a ruinous policy, untaught by recent experience, called them into ferious action. Though the stamp act was repealed, an American revenue was still a favourite object with many in Great-Britain. The equity and the advantage of taxing the colonists by parliamentary authority were very apparent to their understandings, but the mode of effecting it, without hazarding the public tranquillity, was not fo obvious. Mr. Charles Townsend, afterwards chancellor of the exchequer, pawned his credit to accomplish what many so earnestly defired. He accordingly brought into parliament a bill for granting duties in the British colonies, on glass, paper, painters colours, and tea, which was afterwards enacted into a law. the small duties imposed on these articles, had preceded the stamp act, they might have passed unobserved : but the late discussions occasioned by that act, had produced among the colonists, not only an animated conviction of their exemption from parliamentary taxation, but a jealoufy of the defigns of Great-Britain. The fentiments of the Americans on this subject, bore a great resemblance to those of their British countrymen of the preceding century, in the case of ship-money. The amount of that fand pounds. It was distributed upon the people with equality, and expended for the honour and advantage of the kingdom, yet all these circumstances could not reconcile the people of England to the imposition. It was entirely arbitrary. "By the fame right," faid they any other tax may be imposed." In like manner the Americans confidered these small duties, in the nature of an entering wedge, designed to make way for others, which would be greater and heavier. In a relative connection with late acts of parliament, respecting do-In a relative mestic manufactures and foreign commerce, laws for impoling taxes on British commodities exported to the colonies, formed a complete circle of oppression, from which there was no possibility of escaping. The colonists had been previously restrained from manufacturing certain articles for their own confumption. Other acts confined them to the exclusive use of British merchandize. The addition of duties, put them wholly in the power and discretion of Great-Britain "We are not" said they, "permitted to import from any nation, other than our own F 2 parent

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parent state, and have been in some cases by her restrained from manufacturing for ourselves, and she claims a right to do fo in every instance which is incompatible with her interest. To these restrictions we have hitherto submitted, but she now rises in her demands, and imposes duties on those commodities, the purchasing of which, elsewhere than at her market, her laws forbid, and the manu. facturing of which for our own use, she may any moment she pleases restrain. If her right is valid to lay a fmall tax, it is equally so to lay a large one, for from the nature of the case she must be guided exclusively by her own opinions of our ability, and of the propriety Nothing is left for us to of the duties she may impose. do but to complain and pay." They contended that there was no real difference between the principle of these new duties and the stamp act, they were both designed to raile a revenue in America, and in the fame manner: The payment of the duties imposed by the stamp act, might have been eluded by the total difuse of stamped paper, and fo might the payment of these duties, by the total difuse of those articles on which they were laid, but in neither case, without great difficulty. The colonists were therefore reduced to the hard alternative of being obliged totally to disuse articles of the greatest necessity in human life, or to pay a tax without their confent. The fire of opposition which had been smothered by the repeal of the stamp act, burned afresh against the same principle of taxation exhibited in its new form. Mr. Dickenson, of Pennsylvania, on this occasion presented to the public a series of letters figned a Farmer, proving the extreme danger which threatened the liberties of America, from their acquiescence in a precedent which might establish the claim of parliamentary taxation. They were written with great animation, and were read with uncommon avidity. Their reasoning was so convincing, that many of the candid and difinterested citizens of Great-Britain, acknowledged that the American opposition to parliamentary taxation was justifiable. The enormous sums which the stamp act would have collected, had thoroughly alarmed the colonists for their property. It was now demonstrated by several writers, especially by the Pennsylvania Farmer, that a small tax, though most specious, was equally dangerous, as it established a procedent which eventually annihilated American property The declaratory act which at first was the subject of but

s few comments, was now dilated upon, as a foundation for every species of oppression; and the small duties lately imposed, were considered as the beginning of a

train of much greater evils.

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Had the colonists admitted the propriety of raising a parliamentary revenue among them, the erection of an American board of commissioners for managing it, which was about this time instituted at Boston, would have been a convenience, rather than an injury; but united as they were in sentiments of the contrariety of that measure to their natural and constitutional rights, they illy brooked the innovation. As it was coeval with the new duties, they considered it as a certain evidence that the project of an extensive American revenue, notwithstanding the repeal of the stamp act, was still in contemplation. A dislike to British taxation naturally produced a dislike to a board which was to be instrumental in that business, and occasioned many insults to its com-

miffioners. The revenue act of 1767 produced refolves, petitions, addresses, and remonstrances similar to those with which the colonists opposed the stamp act. It also gave rise to a fecond affociation for suspending farther importations of British manufactures, till these offensive duties should be taken off. Uniformity in these measures, was promoted by a circular letter from the affembly of Massachusetts, to the speakers of the other affemblies. This stated the petitions and representations which they had forwarded against the late duties, and strongly pointed out the great difficulties that must arise to themselves and their constituents, from the operation of acts of parliament, imposing duties on the unrepresented American colonies, and requested a reciprocal free communication on public affairs. Most of the provincial assemblies, as they had opportunities of deliberating on the subject, approved of the proceedings of the Massachusetts assembly, and harmonifed with them in the measures which they had adopted. In resolves, they stated their rights in firm, but decent language, and in petitions, they prayed for a repeal of the late acts, which they confidered as intringements on their liberties.

It is not unreasonable to suppose, that the minister who planned these duties, hoped that they would be regarded as regulations of trade. He might also presume, that as they amounted only to an inconsiderable sum, they would

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not give any alarm. The circular letter of the Maffa. chusetts affembly which laid the foundation for united petitions against them, gave therefore great offence. Lord Hillsborough who had lately been appointed Secretary of State, for the American department, wrote letters to the governors of the respective provinces, urging them to exert their influence to prevent the affemblies from taking any notice of it, and he called on the Mai. fachufetts affembly to refcind their proceedings on that fubject. This measure was both injudicious and irritating. To require a public body to rescind a resolution, for fending a letter, which was already fent, answered, and acted upon, was a bad specimen of the wisdom of the new minister. To call a vote for fending a circular letter to invite the affemblies of the neighbouring colonies to communicate together in the pursuit of legal measures to obtain a redress of grievances, " a flagitious attempt to difturb the public peace," appeared to the colonists a very injudicious application of harsh epithets to their constitutional right of petitioning. To threaten a new house of Assembly with dissolution, in case of their not agreeing to rescind an act of a former affembly, which was not executory, but executed, clashed no less with the dictates of common fense than the constitutional rights of British colonists. The proposition for rescinding was negatived, by a majority of 92 to 17. The affembly was immediately diffolved, as had been threatened, This procedure of the new fecretary, was confidered by the colonists as an attempt to suppress all communication of fentiments between them, and to prevent their united fupplications from reaching the royal ear. It answered, no one valuable purpose, but naturally tended to mischief.

The bad humour, which from fuccessive irritation already too much prevailed, was about this time wrought up to a high pitch of refentment and violence, on occafion of the feizure of Mr. Hancock's floop Liberty, for 1768. not having entered all the wines she had brought from June 10. Madeira. The popularity of her owner, the name of the floop, and the general aversion to the board of commissioners, and parliamentary taxation, concurred to inflame the minds of the people. They refented the removal of the floop from the wharf, as implying an apprehension of a refcue. They used every means in their power to interrupt the officers in the execution of their busines;

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business; and numbers swore that they would be revenged. Mr. Harrison the collector, Mr. Hallowell the comptroller, and Mr. Irwine the inspector of imports and exports, were fo roughly handled as to bring their lives in danger. The windows of some of their houses were broken, and the boat of the collector was dragged through the town, and burned on the common. was the temper and disposition of many of the inhabitants, that the commissioners of the customs thought proper to retire on board the Romney man of war: and afterwards to Castle William. The commissioners, from the first moment of their institution, had been an eye fore to the people of Boston. This, though partly owing to their active zeal in detecting fmugglers, principally arose from the affociation which existed in the minds of the inhabitants, between that board and an American revenue, The declaratory act of 1766, the revenue act of 1767; together with the pomp and expence of this board, fo disproportionate to the small income of the present duties, conspired to convince not only the few who were benefited by fmuggling, but the great body of enlightened freemen, that farther and greater impositions of parliamentary taxes were intended. In proportion as this opinion gained ground, the inhabitants became more difrespectful to the executive officers of the revenue, and more disposed in the frenzy of patriotism, to commit outrages on their persons and property. The constant bickering that existed between them and the inhabitants, together with the steady opposition given by the latter, to the discharge of the official duties of the former, induced the commissioners and friends of an American revenue, to folicit the protection of a regular force, to be stationed at Boston. In compliance with their wishes, his Majesty ordered two regiments and some armed vessels to repair thither, for supporting and affifting the officers of the customs in the execution of their duty. This restrained the active exertion of that turbulent spirit, which fince the passing of the late revenue laws, had revived, but it added to the pre-exifting causes thereof.

When it was reported in Boston, that one or more regiments were ordered there, a meeting of the inhabitants was called, and a committee appointed to request the governor to issue precepts for convening a general assembly. He replied, "that he could not comply with

their

Sept. 13. some spirited resolutions were adopted. In particular it was voted, that the select men of Boston should write to the select men of other towns, to propose that a convention be held of deputies from each, to meet at Faneuil hall, in Boston, on the 22d inst. It was afterwards voted, "That as there is apprehension in the minds of many, of an approaching war with France, those inhabitants who are not provided, be requested to

furnish themselves forthwith with arms."

Ninety-fix towns, and eight districts, agreed to the proposal made by the inhabitants of Boston, and appointed deputies to attend a convention, but the town of Hatfield resused its concurrence. When the deputies met, they conducted themselves with moderation, disclaimed all legislative authority, advised the people to pay the greatest descrence to government, and to wait patiently for a redress of their grievances, from his Majesty's wisdom and moderation. After stating to the world the causes of their meeting, and an account of their proceedings, they dissolved themselves after a short session, and went home.

Within a day after the convention broke up, the expected regiments arrived, and were peaceably received. Hints had been thrown out by some idle people, that they should not be permitted to come on thore. Preparations were made by the captains of the men of war in the harbour, to fire on the town, in case opposition had been made to their landing, but the criss for an appeal to arms was not yet arrived. It was hoped by some that the folly and rage of the Bostonians would have led them to this rash measure, and thereby have afforded an opportunity for giving them some naval and military correction, but both prudence and policy induced them to adopt a more temperate line of conduct.

While the contention was kept alive by the successive irritations which have been mentioned, there was, particularly in Massachusetts, a species of warfare carried on between the royal governors and the provincial assemblies. Each watched the other with all the jealousy which strong distrust could inspire. The latter regarded the former as instruments of power, wishing to pay their court to the Mother Country, by curbing the spirit of American freedom, and the former kept a strict eye on

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the latter, left they might smooth the way to independence, at which they were charged with aiming. Lieut. Governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts, virtually challenged the affembly to a dispute, on the ground of the controverly between the two countries. This was accepted by the latter, and the subject discussed with all the subtilty of argument, which the ingenuity of either party

could fuggeft.

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The war of words was not confined to the colonies. While the American affemblies paffed resolutions, afferting their exclusive right to tax their constituents, the parliament by refolves, afferted their unlimited supremacy in and over the colonies. While the former in their public acts disclaimed all views of independence, they were succeffively represented in parliamentary resolves, royal fpeeches, and addresses from Lords and Commons, as being in a state of disobedience to law and government, and as having proceeded to measures subversive of the constitution, and manifesting a disposition to throw off all fubordination to Great-Britain.

In February 1769, both houses of parliament went one step beyond all that had preceded. They then concurred in a joint address to his majesty, in which they expressed their satisfaction in the measures his majesty had purfued.—Gave the strongest assurances that they would effectually support him in such farther measures as might be found necessary to maintain the civil magiftrates in a due execution of the laws, in Massachusett's Bay, and befeeched him " to direct the governor to take the most effectual methods for procuring the fullest information touching all treasons or misprissons of treafon, committed within the government fince the 30th day of December, 1767; and to transmit the same together with the names of the persons who were most active in the commission of such offences, to one of the secretaries of state, in order that his majesty might issue a special commission for enquiring of, hearing and determining the faid offences, within the realm of Great-Britain, purfuant to the provision of the statute of the 35th of King Henry the 8th." The latter part of this address which proposed the bringing of delinquents from Massachusetts, to be tried at a tribunal in Great-Britain, for crimes committed in America, underwent many fevere animadversions.

It was afferted to be totally inconfistent with the spirit of the constitution, for in England a man charged with a crime, had a right to be tried in the county in which his offence was supposed to have been committed. "Justice is regularly and impartially administered in our courts," said the colonists " and yet by direction of parliament, offenders are to be taken by force together with all such persons as may be pointed out as witnesses and carried to England, there to be tried in a distant land, by a jury of strangers, and subject to all the disadvantages which result from want of friends, want of witnesses, and

want of money."

The house of Burgesses of Virginia met, soon after official accounts of the joint address of the lords and commons on this subject reached America; and in a few days after their meeting, passed resolutions expressing " their exclusive right to tax their constituents, and their right to petition their fovereign for redrefs of grievances, and the lawfulness of procuring the concurrence of the other colonies in praying for the royal interpolition, in favour of the violated rights of America: and that all trials for treason, or for any crime whatsoever, committed in that colony, ought to be before his majesty's courts, within the faid colony; and that the feizing any person residing in the faid colony, suspected of any crime whatsoever, committed therein, and fending fuch persons to places beyond the fea to be tried, was highly derogatory of the rights of British subjects." The next day lord Botetourt the governor of Virginia, fent for the house of Burgeffes and addressed them as follows. "Mr. Speaker and gentlemen of the house of Burgesses, I have heard of your resolves, and augur ill of their effects. You have made it my duty to diffolve you, and you are diffolved accordingly."

The affembly of North Carolina adopted resolutions, similar to those of Virginia, for which Tryon their governour dissolved them. The members of the house of Burgesses in Virginia, and of the assembly of North Carolina, after their dissolution, met as private gentlemen, chose their late speakers moderators, and adopted resolutions against importing British goods. The non-importation agreement, was in this manner forwarded by the very measures which were intended to curb the spirit of American freedom, from which it sprung. Meetings of the associators were regularly held in the various pro-

vinces,

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Committees were appointed to examine all veffels arriving from Britain. Cenfures were freely paffed on fuch as refused to concur in these affociations, and their names published in the news-papers as enemies to their country. The regular acts of the provincial affemblies were not fo much respected and obeyed as the decrees of these committees, the affociations were in general as well observed as could be expected, notwithstanding there were some collusions. The tear of mobs, of public resentment and contempt, co-operating with patriotism, preponderated over private interest and convenience. One of the importing merchants of Boston who hefitated in his compliance with the determination of the inhabitants, was waited upon by a committee of tradefmen, with an axeman and a carpenter at their head, who informed him that 1000 men were waiting for his answer, and that if he refused to comply, they could not tell what might be the consequence." He complied, and the news-papers foon after published, that he did it voluntarily.

In Boston, Lieut. Governor Hutchinson endeavoured to promote a counter affociation, but without effect. The friends of importation objected, that till parliament made provision for the punishment of the confederacies against importation, a counter affociation would answer no other purpose, than to expose the affociators to popu-

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The Bostonians, about this time, went one step farther. They reshipped goods to Great-Britain, instead of floring them as formerly. This was refolved upon in a town meeting, on the information of an inhabitant, who communicated a letter he had lately received from a member of parliament, in which it was faid, " that shipping back ten thousand pounds worth of goods would do more than floring a hundred thousand." This turned the scale, and procured a majority of votes for reshipping. Not only in this, but in many other instances, the violences of the colonists were fostered by individuals in Great-Britain. A number of these were in principle with the Americans, in denying the right of parliament to tax them, but others were more influenced by a spirit of opposition to the ministerial majority, than by a regard to the constitutional liberties of either country.

The non-importation agreement had now lasted some time.

time, and by degrees had become general. Several of the colonial affemblies had been diffolved, or prorogued, for afferting the rights of their conftituents. The royal governors, and other friends to an American revenue, were chagrined. The colonists were irritated. Good men, both in England and America, deplored these untoward events, and beheld with concern an increasing ill humour between those, who were bound by interest and

affection, to be friends to each other.

In confequence of the American non-importation agreement, founded in opposition to the duties of 1767, the manufacturers of Great-Britain experienced a renewal of the distresses, which followed the adoption of similar resolutions, in the year 1765, the repeal of these duties was therefore folicited by the fame influence, which had procured the repeal of the stamp act. The rulers of Great-Britain acted without decision. Instead of perfevering in their own fystem of coercion or indeed in any one uniform fystem of colonial government, they struck out a middle line, embarrassed with the consequences, both of feverity and lenity, and which was without the complete benefits of either. Soon after the spirited address to his Majesty, last mentioned, had pasfed both houses of parliament, affurances were given for repealing all the duties, imposed in 1767, excepting that

of three pence per pound on tea.

Anxious on the one hand to establish parliamentary fupremacy, and on the other afraid to stem the torrent of opposition, they conceded enough to weaken the former, and yet not enough to fatisfy the latter. Great-Britain generously repealed the whole, and for ever relinquished all claim to the right, or even the exercise of the right of taxation, the union of the two countries might have lasted for ages. Had she seriously determined to compel the fubmission of the colonies, nothing could have been more unfriendly to this defign, than her repeated concessions to their reiterated affociations. The declaratory act, and the refervation of the duty on tea, left the cause of contention between the two countries, in full force, but the former was only 2 claim on paper, and the latter might be evaded, by refusing to purchase any tea, on which the parliamentary tax was imposed. The colonists, therefore, conceiving that their commerce might be renewed, without establishing any precedent, injurious to their liberties, relaxed in their

1769.

their affociations, in every particular, except tea, and immediately recommended the importation of all other articles of merchandise. A political calm once more took place. The parent state might now have closed the dispute for ever, and honourably receded, without a formal relinquishment of her claims. Neither the reservation of the duty on tea, by the British Parliament, nor the exceptions made by the colonists, of importing no tea, on which a duty was imposed, would, if they had been lest to their own operation, have disturbed the returning harmony of the two countries. Without fresh irritation, their wounds might have healed, and not a scar been lest behind.

These two abortive attempts to raise a parliamentary revenue in America, caused a fermentation in the minds of the colonists, and gave birth to many enquiries respecting their natural rights. Reflections and reasonings on this subject produced a high sense of liberty, and a general conviction that there could be no security for their property, if they were to be taxed at the discretion of a British Parliament, in which they were unrepresented, and over which they had no controul. A determination not only to oppose this new claim of taxation, but to keep a strict watch, lest it might be established in some disguised

form, took poffession of their minds.

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It commonly happens in the discussion of doubtful claims between states, that the ground of the original dispute insensibly changes. When the mind is employed in investigating one subject, others affociated with it naturally present themselves. In the course of enquiries on the subject of parliamentary taxation, the restriction on the trade of the colonists-the necessity that was imposed on them to purchase British and other manufactures, loaded with their full proportion of all taxes paid by those who made or fold them, became more generally While American writers were vindicating their country from the charge of contributing nothing to the common expences of the empire, they were led to fet off to their credit, the difadvantage of their being confined exclusively to purchase such manufactures in Britain. They instituted calculations by which they demonstrated that the monopoly of their trade, drew from them greater sums for the support of government, than were usually paid by an equal number of their fellow citizens of Great-Britain; and that taxation, superadded to such a

monopoly, would leave them in a ftate of perfect uncompensated slavery. The investigation of these subjects brought matters into view which the friends of union ought to have kept out of fight. These circumstances, together with the extensive population of the Eastern States, and their adventurous spirit of commerce suggested to some bold spirits that not only British taxation, but British navigation laws were unfriendly to the interests of America. Speculations of this magnitude fuited well with the extensive views of some capital merchants, but never would have roused the bulk of the people, had not new matter brought the dispute between the two countries to a point, in which every individual was interested.

On reviewing the conduct of the British ministry, respecting the colonies, much weakness as well as folly appears. For a succession of years there was a steady pursuit of American revenue, but great inconsistence in the projects for obtaining it. In one moment the parliament was for enforcing their laws, the next for repealing them. Doing and undoing, menacing and fubmitting, straining and relaxing, followed each other, in alternate succession. The object of administration, though twice relinquished as to any present efficiency, was inva-riably pursued, but without any unity of system.

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On the 9th of May, 1769, the king in his speech to parliament, highly applauded their hearty concurrence, in maintaining the execution of the laws, in every part of his dominions. Five days after this speech, Lord Hillsborough, secretary of state for the colonies, wrote to Lord Botetourt, Governour of Virginia: "I can take upon me to affure you, notwithstanding informations to the contrary, from men, with factious and feditious views, that his Majesty's present administration have at no time entertained a defign to propose to Parliament, to lay any farther taxes upon America, for the purpose of raising a revenue, and that it is at present their intention to propose the next session of parliament, to take off the duties upon glass, paper, and colours, upon confideration of fuch duties having been laid contrary to the true principles of commerce." The governor was also informed, that " his Majesty relied upon his prudence and fidelity, to make fuch an explanation of his Majesty's measures, as would tend to remove prejudices, and to re-establish mutual confidence and affection between the Mother Country

Country and the colonies." In the exact spirit of his instructions, lord Botetourt addressed the Virginia assembly as follows: " It may possibly be objected, that as his Majesty's present administration are not immortal, their fuccessors may be inclined to attempt to undo what the present ministers shall have attempted to perform, and to that objection I can give but this answer, that it is my firm opinion that the plan I have stated to you, will certainly take place, and that it will never be departed from; and so determined am I for ever to abide by it, that I will be content to be declared infamous, if I do not to the last hour of my life, at all times, in all places, and upon all occasions, exert every power, with which I either am, or ever shall be, legally invested, in order to obtain and maintain for the continent of America, that satisfaction, which I have been authorifed to promife this day, by the confidential fervants of our gracious fovereign, who, to my certain knowledge, rates his honor fo high, that he would rather part with his crown, than preferve it by deceit."

These assurances were received with transports of joy by the Virginians. They viewed them as pledging his Majesty for security, that the late design for raising a revenue in America was abandoned, and never more to be resumed. The Assembly in Virginia, in answer to Lord Botetourt, expressed themselves thus: "We are sure our most gracious sovereign, under whatever changes may happen in his considential servants, will remain immutable in the ways of truth and justice, and that he is incapable of deceiving his faithful subjects; and we esteem your Lordship's information not only as warranted, but even sanctified by the royal word."

How far these solemn engagements with the Americans were observed, subsequent events will demonstrate. In a perfect reliance on them, most of the colonists returned to their ancient habits of good humour, and slattered themselves that no suture Parliament would undertake to give,

From the royal and ministerial assurances given in favour of America, in the year 1769, and the subsequent repeal in 1770, of five sixths of the duties which had been imposed in 1767; together with the consequent renewal of the mercantile intercourse between Great-Britain and the colonies: Many hoped that the contention between the two countries was finally closed. In all

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the provinces, excepting Maffachusetts, appearances seem. ed to savour that opinion. Many incidents operated there to the prejudice of that harmony, which had begun, elsewhere, to return. The stationing a military force among them, was a fruitful source of uneasines. The royal army had been brought thither, with the avowed design of enforcing submission to the Mother Country. Speeches from the throne, and addresses from both houses of parliament, had taught them to look upon the inhabitants as a factious turbulent people, who aimed at throwing off all subordination to Great Britain. They, on the other hand were accustomed to look upon the soldiery as instruments of tyranny, sent on purpose to dragoon them out of their liberties.

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Reciprocal infults foured the tempers, and mutual injuries embittered the passions, of the opposite parties: besides, some siery spirits who thought it an indignity to have troops quartered among them, were constantly exciting the towns-people to quarrel with the foldiers.

On the fecond of March, a fray took place near Mr. Gray's Rope-walk, between a private soldier of the 29th regiment, and an inhabitant. The former was supported by his comrades, and the latter by the rope-makers, till feveral on both fides were involved in the confequences. On the 5th a more dreadful scene was presented. foldiers when under arms, were preffed upon, infulted and pelted by a mob armed with clubs, flicks, and fnowballs covering stones. They were also dared to fire. In this fituation, one or the foldiers was refentment fired at the supposed aggressor. This was refentment fired at the supposed from fix others. Three of fituation, one of the foldiers who had received a blow, in the inhabitants were killed, and five were dangeroully The town was immediately in commotion, Such was the temper, force, and number of the inhabitants, that nothing but an engagement to remove the troops out of the town, together with the advice of moderate men, prevented the townsmen from falling on the foldiers. The killed were buried in one vault, and in a most respectful manner to express the indignation of the inhabitants at the flaughter of their brethren, by foldiers quartered among them, in violation of their civil liberties. ton the captain who commanded, and the party which fired on the inhabitants, were committed to jail, and afterwards tried. The captain, and fix of the men, were acquitted. Two were brought in guilty of man-flaughter. It appeared

1770.

peared on the trial, that the foldiers were abused, insulted, threatened, and pelted, before they fired. It was also proved, that only seven guns were fired by the eight prisoners. These circumstances induced the jury to make a savourable verdict. The result of the trial reslected great honour on John Adams, and Josiah Quincy, the council for the prisoners, and also on the integrity of the jury, who ventured to give an upright verdict, in defiance of

popular opinions.

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The events of this tragical night, sunk deep in the minds of the people, and were made subservent to important purposes. The anniversary of it was observed with great solemnity. Eloquent orators, were successively employed to deliver an annual oration, to preserve the remembrance of it fresh in their minds. On these occasions the blessings of liberty—the horrors of slavery—the dangers of a standing army—the rights of the colonies, and a variety of such topics were presented to the public view, under their most pleasing and alarming forms. These annual orations administered such to the fire of liberty, and kept it burning, with an incessant slame.

The obstacles to returning harmony, which have already been mentioned, were increased, by making the governor and judges in Maffachusetts, independent of the province. Formerly, they had been paid by yearly grants from the affembly, but about this time provision was made for paying their falaries by the crown. This was refented as a dangerous innovation, as an infraction of their charter, and as destroying that balance of power, which is esfential to free governments. That the crown should pay the falary of the chief justice, was represented by the affembly, as a species of bribery, tending to bias his judicial determinations. They made it the foundation for impeaching Mr. Justice Oliver, before the governor, but he excepted to their proceedings, as unconstitutional. The Affembly, nevertheless, gained two points. They rendered the governor more odious to the inhabitants, and increased the public respect for themselves, as the counterpart of the British House of Commons, and as guardians of the rights of the people.

A personal animosity, between Lieut. Governor Hutchinson, and some distinguished patriots, in Massachusetts, contributed to perpetuate a slame of discontent in that province, after it had elsewhere visibly abated. This was

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worked up, in the year 1773, to a high pitch, by a fingular combination of circumstances. Some letters had been written, in the course of the dispute, by Governor Hutchinfon, Lieut. Governor Oliver and others, in Boston, to perfons in power and office, in England, which contained a very unfavourable representation of the state of public affairs, and tended to shew the necessity of coercive meafures, and of changing the chartered system of government, to secure the obedience of the province. These letters fell into the hands of Dr. Franklin, agent of the province, who transmitted them to Boston. The indignation and animofity, which was excited on the receipt of them, knew no bounds. The House of Assembly agreed on a petition and remonstrance to his Majesty, in which they charged their Governor and Lieut. Governor with being betrayers of their trusts, and of the people they governed, and of giving private, partial, and false information. They also declared them enemies to the colonies, removal from their places. These charges were carried

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Jan. 29, and prayed for justice against them, and for their speedy 1774.

through by a majority of 82 to 12.

This petition and remonstrance being transmitted to England, the merits of it were discussed before his Majesty's privy council. After an hearing before that board, in which Dr. Franklin represented the province of Masfachusetts, the Governor and Lieut. Governor were acquitted. Mr. Wedderburne, who defended the accused royal fervants, in the course of his pleadings, inveighed against Dr. Franklin, in the severest language, as the fomenter of the disputes between the two countries. It was no protection to this venerable fage, that being the agent of Maffachusetts, he conceived it his duty to inform his constituents, of letters, written on public affairs, calculated to overturn their chartered constitution. The age, respectability, and high literary character of the subject of Mr. Wedderburne's philippic, turned the attention of the public on the transaction. The infult offered to one of their public agents, and especially to one, who was both the idol and ornament of his native country, funk deep in the minds of the Americans. That a faithful fervant, whom they loved, and almost adored, should be infulted, for discharging his official duty, rankled in their Dr. Franklin was also immediately dismissed from the office of deputy postmaster general, which he held under the crown. It was not only by his transmiffion

mission of these letters, that he had given offence to the British ministry, but by his popular writings, in savor of America. Two pieces of his, in particular, had lately attracted a large share of public attention, and had an extensive influence on both sides of the Atlantic. The one purported to be an edict from the King of Prussia, for taxing the inhabitants of Great-Britain, as descendants of emigrants from his dominions. The other was entitled, "Rules for reducing a great empire to a small one." In both of these he had exposed the claims of the Mother Country, and the proceedings of the British ministry, with

the feverity of poignant fatire. For ten years, there had now been but little intermission to the disputes between Great-Britain and her co-Their respective claims had never been compromifed on middle ground. The calm which followed the repeal of the stamp act, was in a few months disturbed, by the revenue act of the year 1767. The tranquillity which followed the repeal of five fixths of that act in the year 1770, was nothing more than a truce. The refervation of the duty on tea, made as an avowed evidence of the claims of Great-Britain to tax her colonies, kept alive the jealoufy of the colonists, while at the same time the flationing of a standing army in Massachusetts—the continuance of a board of commissioners in Boston—the constituting the governors and judges of that province. independent of the people, were constant sources of irritation. The altercations which, at this period, were common between the royal governors and the provincial Affemblies, together with numerous vindications of the claims of America, made the subject familiar to the colonists. The ground of the controversy was canvassed in every company. The more the Americans read, reasoned, and converfed on the fubject, the more were they convinced of their right to the exclusive disposal of their property. This was followed by a determination to refift all encroachments on that palladium of British liberty. They were as strongly convinced of their right to refuse and refift parliamentary taxation, as the ruling powers of Great-Britain, of their right to demand and enforce their submiffion to it.

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The claims of the two countries, being thus irreconcileably opposed to each other, the partial calm which followed the concession of parliament in 1770, was liable to dis-

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turbance, from every incident. Under such circumstances, nothing less than the most guarded conduct on both sides could prevent a renewal of the controversy. Instead of following those prudential measures which would have kept the ground of the dispute out of sight, an impolitic scheme was concerted, between the British ministry and the East-India company, which placed the claims of Great-Britain and of her colonies in hostile array against each other.

## CHAPTER III.

Tea is fent by the East-India Company to America, and is refused, or destroyed, by the Colonists. Boston port all, &c.

IN the year 1773, commenced a new zera of the American controversy. To understand this in its origin, it is necessary to recur to the period, when the foliary duty on tea, was excepted from the partial repeal of the revenue act of 1767. When the duties which had been laid on glass, paper and painters colours were taken off, 1 respectable minority in parliament contended, that the duty on tea should also be removed. To this it was replied, That as the Americans denied the legality of taxing them, a total repeal would be a virtual acquiescence in their claims; and that in order to preferve the rights of the Mo ther Country, it was necessary to retain the preamble, and at least one of the taxed articles." It was answered, that partial repeal would be a fource of endless discontent-and that the tax on tea would not defray the expences of col lecting it. The motion in favour of a total repeal, was thrown out by a great majority. As the parliament thought fit to retain the tax on tea for an evidence of the right of taxation, the Americans in like manner, to confiften

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confiftent with themselves, in denying that right, discontinued the importation of that commodity. While there was no attempt to introduce tea into the colonies against this declared sense of the inhabitants, these opposing claims were in no danger of collision. In that case the Mother Country might have solaced herself, with her ideal rights, and the colonies, with their favourite opinion of a total exemption from parliamentary taxes, without disturbing the public peace. This mode of compromising the disput, which seemed at first designed as a salvo for the honour and consistency of both parties, was by the interserence of the East-India Company, in combination with the British

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ministry, completely overset.

The expected revenue from tea failed, in consequence of the American affociation to import none, on which a duty was charged. This, though partially violated in some of the colonies, was well observed in others, and particularly in Pennsylvania, where the duty was never paid on more than one chest of that commodity. This proceeded as much from the spirit of gain as of patriotism. The merchants found means of supplying their countrymen with tea, smuggled from countries to which the power of Britain did not extend. They doubtless conceived themselves to be supporting the rights of their country, by refusing to purchase tea from Britain, but they also reslected that if they could bring the same commodity to market, free of duty, their profits would be

The love of gain was not peculiar to the American merchants. From the diminished exportation to the colonies, the ware-houses of the British East-India company had in them about seventeen millions of pounds of tea, for which a market could not readily be procured. The ministry and East-India company unwilling to lose, the one the expected revenue from the sale of tea in America—the other, their usual commercial profits, agreed on a measure by which they supposed both would be secured.

The East-India company were by law authorized to export their tea free of duties to all places whatsoever. By this regulation, tea, though loaded with an exceptionable duty, would come cheaper to the colonies, than before it had been made a source of revenue: For the duty taken off it, when exported from Great-Britain, was greater than what was to be paid on its importation into

the colonies. Confident of fuccess in finding a market for their tea, thus reduced in its price, and also of collecting a duty on its importation and fale in the colonies, the East-India company freighted several ships, with teas for the different colonies, and appointed agents for the disposal thereof. This measure united several interests in opposition to its execution. The patriotism of the Americans was corroborated by several auxiliary aids, no ways connected with the cause of liberty.

The merchants in England were alarmed at the losses that must accrue to themselves, from the exportations of the East-India company, and from the sales going through the hands of consignees. Letters were written from that country, to colonial patriots, urging that opposition to

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which they of themselves were prone.

The smugglers who were both numerous and powerful, could not relish a scheme which by underselling them, and taking a profitable branch of business out of their hands, threatened a diminution of their gains. The colonists were too suspicious of the designs of Great-Britain to be

imposed upon anivigual to sasam bauo's

The cry of endangered liberty once more excited an alarm from New-Hampshire to Georgia. The first oppolition to the execution of the scheme adopted by the East-India company began with the American merchants. They faw a profitable branch of their trade likely to be loft, and the benefits of it to be transferred to people in Great-Britain. They felt for the wound that would be inflicted on their country's claim of exemption from parliamentary taxation, but they felt with equal fensibility for the losses they would fustain by the diversion of the ftreams of commerce, into unufual channels. Though the opposition originated in the felfishness of the merchants, it did not end there. The great body of the people, from principles of the purest patriotism, were They considered brought over to fecond their wishes. the whole scheme as calculated to seduce them into an acquiescence with the views of parliament, for raising an American revenue. Much pains were taken to enlighten the colonists on this subject, and to convince them of the eminent hazard to which their liberties were exposed.

The provincial patriots infifted largely on the persevering determination of the parent state to establish her claim of taxation, by compelling the sale of tea in the colonies colonies against the solemn resolutions and declared sense of the inhabitants, and that at a time when the commercial intercourse of the two countries was renewed, and their ancient harmony fast returning. The proposed venders of the tea were represented as revenue officers, employed in the collection of an unconstitutional tax, imposed by Great-Britain. The colonists reasoned with themselves, that as the duty and the price of the commodity were inseparably blended, if the tea was fold, every purchaser would pay a tax imposed by the British Parliament, as part of the purchase money. To obviate this evil, and to prevent the liberties of a great country from being facrificed by inconfiderate purchasers, fundry town meetings were held in the capitals of the different provinces, and combinations were formed to obstruct the fales of the tea fent by the East-India company.

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The resolutions entered into by the inhabitants of Philadelphia, on October the 18th 1773, afford a good spetimen of the whole—" these were as follows.

rent right of freemen; that there can be no property in that which another can, of right, take from us without our confent; that the claim of parliament to tax America, is in other words, a claim of right to levy contributions on us at pleasure.

2. That the duty imposed by parliament upon tea landed in America, is a tax on the Americans, or levying contributions on them without their consent.

3. That the express purpose for which the tax is levied on the Americans,—namely, for the support of government, administration of justice, and defence of his Majesty's dominions in America, has a direct tendency to render assemblies useless, and to introduce arbitrary government and slavery.

4. That the virtuous and steady opposition to this ministerial plan of governing America, is absolutely necessary to preserve even the shadow of liberty, and is a duty which every freeman in America owes to his country, to himself, and to his posterity.

India company, to send out their tea to America, subject to the payment of duties on its being landed here, is an open attempt to enforce this ministerial plan, and a violent attack upon the liberties of America.

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6. That it is the duty of every American to oppose this

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attempt.

7. That whoever shall directly or indirectly, countenance this attempt, or in any wife aid or abet in unloading, receiving or vending the tea sent, or to be sent out by the East-India company, while it remains subject to the payment of a duty here, is an enemy to his country.

8. That a committee be immediately chosen to wait on those gentlemen, who it is reported, are appointed by the East-India company, to receive and sell the said tea, and request them from a regard to their own character and the peace and good order of the city and province, im-

mediately to refign their appointment." we be-

As the time approached when the arrival of the tea thips might be foon expected, fuch measures were adopted as feemed most likely to prevent the landing of their cargoes. The tea confignees, appointed by the East-India company, were in feveral places compelled to relinquish their appointments, and no others could be found hardy enough to act in their stead. The pilots in the river Delaware, were warned not to conduct any of the tea thips into their harbour. In New-York, popular vengeance was denounced against all who would contribute, in any measure, to forward the views of the East India company. The captains of the New-York and Philadelphia ships, being apprized of the resolution of the people, and fearing the consequences of landing a commodity, charged with an odious duty, in violation of their declared public fentiments, concluded to return directly to Great-Britain, without making any entry at the custom house.

It was otherwise in Massachusetts. The tea ships designed for the supply of Boston, were consigned to the
sons, cousins and particular friends, of governor Hutchinson. When they were called upon to resign, they
answered "That it was out of their power." The
collector resused to give a clearance, unless the vessels
were discharged of dutiable articles as by law directed.
The governor resused to give a pass for the vessels, unless
properly qualified from the custom house. The governor likewise requested Admiral Montague to guard the
passages out of the harbour, and gave orders to suffer no
vessels, coasters excepted, to pass the fortress from the
town without a pass signed by himself. From a combination of these circumstances, the return of the tea
vessels from Boston, was rendered impossible. The

inhabitants

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inhabitants then had no option, but to prevent the landing of the tea, or to fuffer it to be landed, and depend on the unanimity of the people not to purchase it, or to destroy the tea, or to fuffer a deep laid scheme against their facred liberties to take effect. The first would have required inceffant watching by night, as well as by day, for a period of time, the duration of which no one could compute. The fecond would have been visionary to childishness, by suspending the liberties of a growing country, on the felf denial and discretion of every tea drinker in the province. They viewed the tea as the vehicle of an unconstitutional tax, and as inseparably affociated with it. To avoid the one, they refolved to destroy the other. About seventeen persons dressed as Indians, repaired to the tea ships, broke open 342 chests of tea, and without doing any other damage, discharged their contents into the

Thus by the inflexibility of the governor, the iffue of this business was different, at Boston, from what it was elsewhere. The whole cargoes of tea were returned from New-York and Philadelphia. That which was sent to Charlestown was landed and stored but not offered for sale. Mr. Hutchinson had repeatedly urged government, at home, to be firm and persevering, he could not therefore consistent with his honour depart from a line of conduct, he had so often and so strongly recommended to his superiors. He also believed that the inhabitants would not dare to persect their engagements, and slattered himself that they would desist, when the critical moment arrived.

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he nts Admitting the rectitude of the American claims of exemption, from parliamentary taxation, the destruction of the tea by the Bostonians, was warranted by the great law of felf preservation, for it was not possible for them, by any other means, within the compass of probability, to discharge the duty they owed to their country.

The event of this business was very different from what had been expected in England. The colonists acted with so much union and system, that there was not a single thest of any of the cargoes sent out by the East-India company on this occasion, sold for their benefit.

Intelligence of these proceedings was, on the 7th of March 1774, communicated, in a message from the throne, to both houses of parliament. In this communication the conduct of the colonists was represented as not only obstructing the commerce of Great-Britain, but

as subversive of its constitution. The message was accompanied with a number of papers, containing copies and extracts of letters, from the feveral royal governors and others, from which it appeared that the opposition to the fale of the tea was not peculiar to Maffachusetts. but common to all the colonies. These papers were accompanied with accounts fetting forth, that nothing short of parliamentary interference was capable of re-establish. ing order among the turbulent colonists, and that therefore decifive measures should be immediately adopted for fecuring the dependence of the colonies. If the right of levying taxes on the Americans was vested in the parent state, these inferences were well founded; but if it was not, their conduct in refifting an invasion of their rights was justified, not only by many examples in the history of Britain, but by the spirit of the constitution of that country which they were oppofing.

By the destruction of the tea, the people of Boston had incurred the fanction of penal laws. Those in Great-Britain who wished for an opportunity to take vengeance on that town, commonly supposed by them to be the mother of sedition and rebellion, rejoiced that her inhabitants

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had laid themselves open to castigation.

It was well known that the throwing of the tea into the river, did not originate with the persons who were the immediate instruments of that act of violence. But that the whole had been concerted at a public meeting, and was in a qualified fense, the act of the town. The univerfal indignation which in Great-Britain was excited against the people of Boston, pointed out to the ministry the fuitableness of the present moment for humbling them. Though the oftenfible ground of complaint was nothing more than a trespass on private property, committed by private persons, yet it was well known to be part of a long digested plan of refistance to parliamentary taxation. Every measure that might be purfued on the occasion feemed to be big with the fate of the empire. To proceed in the usual forms of law, appeared to the rulers in Great-Britain to be a departure from their dignity. It was urged by the ministry that parliament, and parliament only, was capable of re-establishing tranquillity among these turbulent people, and of bringing order out of confusion. To stifle all opposition from the merchants, the public papers were filled with writings which stated the impossibility of carrying on a future trade to America, if this flagrant outrage on commerce should go unpunished. It

It was in vain urged by the minority that no good could arise from coercion, unless the minds of the Americans were made easy on the subject of taxation. Equally vain was a motion for a retrospect into the conduct of the ministry, which had provoked their resistance.

The parliament discovered an aversion from looking back to the original ground of the dispute, and confined themselves solely to the late misbehaviour of the Americans, without any enquiry into the provoking causes

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The violence of the Bostonians in destroying an article of commerce, was largely infifted upon, without any indulgence for the jealous spirit of liberty, in the descendants of Englishmen. The connection between the tea and the unconstitutional duty imposed thereon, was overlooked, and the public mind of Great-Britain folely fixed on the obstruction given to commerce, by the turbulent colonists. The spirit raised against the Americans became as high and as ftrong as their most inveterate enemies could defire. This was not confined to the common people, but took possession of legislators, whose unclouded minds ought to be exalted above the mifts of prejudice or partiality. Such, when they confult on public affairs, should be free from the impulses of passion. for it rarely happens that refolutions adopted in anger. are founded in wisdom. The parliament in Great-Britain, transported with indignation against the people of Boston, in a fit of rage resolved to take legislative vengeance, on that devoted town.

Difregarding the forms of her own constitution by which none are to be condemned unheard, or punished without a trial, a bill was finally passed, on the 17th day after it was first moved for, by which the port of Boston was virtually blocked up, for it was legally precluded from the privilege of landing and discharging, or of lading and shipping of goods, wares and merchandise. The minister who proposed this measure, stated in support of it, that the opposition to the authority of parliament, had always originated in that colony, and had always been instigated by the seditious proceedings of the town of Boston: that it was therefore necessary to make an example of that town, which by an unparalleled outrage had violated the freedom of commerce; that Great-Britain would be wanting in the protection she owed to

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her peaceable fubjects, if the did not punish fuch an infult. in an exemplary manner. He therefore proposed, that the town of Boston should be obliged to pay for the te which had been destroyed. He was farther of opinion. that making a pecuniary fatisfaction for the injury committed, would not alone be fufficient, but that in addition thereto, fecurity must be given in future, that trade may be fafely carried on-property protected-laws obeyedand duties paid. He urged, therefore that it would be proper to take away from Boston the privilege of a port, until his Majesty should be satisfied in these particulats, and publicly declare in council, on a proper certificate, of the good behaviour of the town, that he was fo fatisfied. Until this should happen he proposed that the custom house officers should be removed to Salem. The minister hoped that this act would execute itself, or a most, that a few frigates would secure its execution. He also hoped, that the prospect of advantage to the town of Salem, from its being made the feat of the custom house, and from the exclusion of the port of Boston, would detach them from the interest of the latter, and dispose them to support a measure, from which they had so much to expect. It was also prefumed that the other colonies would leave Boston to suffer the punishment due to her demerits. The abettors of parliamentary supremacy flattered themselves that this decided conduct of Great-Britain would, for ever, extinguish all opposition from the refactory colonists to the claims of the Mother Country; and the apparent equity of obliging a delinquent town w make reparation for an injury occasioned by the factious fpirit of its inhabitants, filenced many of the friends of America. The consequences resulting from this mafure, were the averse of what were wished for by the first, and dreaded by the laft.

By the operation of the Boston port act, the preceding situation of its inhabitants, and that of the East-India company was reversed. The former had more reason to complain of the disproportionate penalty to which they were indiscriminately subjected, than the latter of that outrage on her property, for which punishment had been inflicted. Hitherto the East-India company were the injured party, but from the passing of this act, the balance of injury was on the opposite side. If wrongs received entitled the former to reparation, the latter had a much stronger title on the same ground. For the act

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of seventeen or eighteen individuals, twice as many thou-

Both parties viewed the case on a much larger scale than that of municipal law. The people of Boston alledged, in vindication of their conduct, that the tea was a weapon aimed at their liberties, and that the fame principles of felf prefervation which justify the breaking of the affaffins fword uplifted for destruction, equally authorised the destruction of that tea which was the vehicle of an unconflitutional tax subversive of their liberties. The parliament of Great-Britain confidered the act of the people of Boston, in destroying the tea, as an open defiance of that country. The demerit of the action as an offence against property, was lost in the supposed superior demerit of treasonable intention to emancipate themselves from a state of colonial dependence. The Americans conceived the case to be intimately connected with their liberties; the inhabitants of Great-Britain with their supremacy, the former considered it as a duty they owed their country, to make a common cause with the people of Boston, the latter thought themselves under equal obligations to support the privileges of parliament.

On the third reading of the Boston port bill, a petition was prefented by the lord mayor, in the name of feveral natives and inhabitants of North America, then refiding in London. It was drawn with great force of language, and stated that " the proceedings of parliament against Boston were repugnant to every principle of law and justice, and established a precedent by which no man in America could enjoy a moment's fecurity." The friends of parliamentary supremacy had long regretted the democratic constitutions of the provinces as adverse to their schemes. They saw with concern the fleady opposition that was given to their measures by the American legislatures. These constitutions were planned when Great-Britain neither feared nor cared for her colonies. Not suspecting that she was laying the foundation of future states, she granted charters that gave to the people fo much of the powers of government as enabled them to make not only a formidable, but a regular conftitutional opposition, to the country from which they fprung. -

Long had her rulers wished for an opportunity to revoke these charters, and to new model these governments.

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The present moment seemed favourable to this design. The temper of the nation was high, and the refentment against the province of Massachusetts general and violent, The late outrages in Boston furnished a tolerable pretence for the attempt. An act of the British parliament speedily followed the one for shutting up the port of Boston, entitled, an act for the better regulating the government of Maffachusetts. The object of this was to alter the charter of the province in the following particulars: The council or fecond branch of the legislature heretofore elected by the general court, was to be from the first of August 1774, appointed by the crown. The royal governor was also by the same act, invested with the power of appointing and removing all judges of the interior courts of common pleas -commissioners of oyer and terminer—the attorney general—provost marthal-justices-sheriffs, &c. The town meetings which were fanctioned by the charter, were with a few exceptions forbidden to be held, without the leave of the governor or lieutenant governor in writing, expressing the special business of said meeting, first had and obtained; and with a farther restriction, that no matter should be treated of at these meetings, excepting the election of public officers, and the business noticed in the leave given by the governor or lieutenant governor. Jurymen who had been before elected by the freeholders and inhabitants of the feveral towns, were to be, by this new act, all summoned and returned, by the theriffs of the respective counties. The whole executive government was taken out of the hands of the people, and the nomination of all important officers vefted in the king or his governor.

This act excited a greater alarm than the port act. The one effected only the metropolis, the other the whole province. The one had the appearance of being merited, as it was well known that an act of violence had be en committed by its inhabitants, under the fanction of a town meeting; but the other had no stronger justifying reason than that the proposed alterations were, in the opinion of the parliament, became absolutely necessary, in order to the preservation of the peace and good order of the said province. In support of this bill, the minister who brought it in alledged, that an executive power was wanting in the country. The very people, said he, who commit the riots are the posse comitatus in which the force of the civil power consists. He farther urged the futility

futility of making laws, the execution of which, under the present form of government in Massachusetts, might be so easily evaded, and therefore contended for a necessity to alter the whole frame of their constitution, as far as related to its executive and judicial powers. In opposition it was urged, that the taking away the civil constitution of a whole people secured by a solemn charter, upon general charges of delinquencies and defects, was a stretch of power of the most arbitrary and dangerous nature.

By the English constitution charters were facred, and only revokable by a due course of law, and on a conviction of misconduct. They were solemn compacts between the prince and the people, and exempt from the constitutional power of either party. The abettors of the British schemes reasoned in a summary way. They faid "that the colonies, particularly Maffachufetts, by their circular letters; affociations and town meetings, have for years past thwarted all the measures of government, and are meditating independency. This turbulent spirit of theirs is fostered by their constitution, which invests them with too much power to be confiftent with their state of subordination. Let us therefore lay the axe at the root new model their charter, and lop off those privileges which they have abused."

When the human mind is agitated with passion it rarely discerns its own interest, and but faintly foresees consequences. Had the parliament stopped short with the Boston port act the motives to union and to make a common cause with that metropolis, would have been seeble, perhaps inessectual to have roused the other provinces; but the arbitrary mutilation of the important privileges contained in a solemn charter, without a trial—without a hearing, by the will of parliament, convinced the most moderate that the cause of Massachusetts was the cause of

all the provinces.

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It readily occurred to those who guided the helm of Great-Britain, that riots would probably take place, in attempting the execution of the acts just mentioned. They also discerned that such was the temper of the people, that trials for murders committed in suppressing riots, if held in Massachusetts, would seldom terminate in savour of the parties, who were engaged on the side of government. To make their system compleat, it was necessary to go one step farther, and to screen their active friends from the apprehended partiality of such trials. It was therefore provided

vided by law, that if any person was indicted for murder, or for any capital offence committed in aiding magistracy, that the governor might fend the person so indicted to another colony, or to Great-Britain to be tried. This law was the subject of severe comments. It was considered as an act of indemnity to those who should embrue their hands in the blood of their fellow citizens. It was asked how the relations of a murdered man could effectually profecute, if they must go three thousand miles to attend that business. It was contended that the act by stopping the usual course of justice, would probably give rise to affassinations and dark revenge among individuals, and encourage all kinds of lawless violence. The charge of partiality was retorted. For faid they, " If a party spirit against the authority of Great-Britain would condemn an active officer in Massachusetts as a murderer, the same party spirit for preferving the authority of Great-Britain, would in that country, acquit a murderer as a spirited performer of his duty. The cafe of captain Preston was also quoted as a proof of the impartial administration of justice in Massachusetts.

The same natives of America who had petitioned against the Boston port bill, presented a second one against these two bills. With uncommon energy of language, they pointed out many constitutional objections against them, and concluded with fervently beseeching, "that the parliament would not, by passing them reduce their countrymen to an abject state of misery and humiliation, or drive them to the last resource of despair." The lords of the minority entered also a protest against the passing of each of these bills.

It was fortunate for the people of Boston, and those who wished to promote a combination of the colonies against Great-Britain, that these three several laws passed nearly at the same time. They were presented in quick progression, either in the form of bills or of acts, to the consideration of the inslamed Americans, and produced effects on their minds, infinitely greater than could have been expected from either, especially from the Boston port act alone.

When the fire of indignation excited by the first, was burning, intelligence of these other acts, operated like sluel, and made it slame out with encreasing vehemence. The three laws were considered as forming a complete system of tyranny, from the operation of which, there

was no chance of making a peaceable escape.

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" By the first," faid they, " the property of unoffending thousands is arbitrarily taken away, for the act of a few individuals; by the fecond our chartered liberties are annihilated; and by the third, our lives may be defroyed with impunity. Property, liberty, and life, are all facrificed on the altar of ministerial vengeance." This mode of reasoning was not peculiar to Massachusetts. These three acts of parliament, contrary to the expectation of those who planned them, became a cement of a firm union among the colonies, from New-Hampshire to Georgia. They now openly faid, "our charters and other rights and immunities must depend on the pleasure of parliament." They were fensible that they had all concurred, more or lefs, in the fame line of opposition which had provoked these severe statutes against Massachusetts; and they believed that vengeance though delayed, was not remitted, and that the only favour the least culpable could expect, was to be the last that would be devoured. The friends of the colonies contended that these laws were in direct contradiction to the letter and the spirit of the British constitution. Their opposers could support them on no stronger grounds than those of political necessity and expedience. They acknowledged them to be contrary to the established mode of proceeding, but defended them as tending ultimately to preserve the constitution, from the meditated independency of the colonies.

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Such was the temper of the people in England, that the acts hitherto passed were popular. A general opinion had gone forth in the Mother Country, that the people of Massachusetts, by their violent opposition to government, had drawn on themselves merited correction.

The parliament did not stop here, but proceeded one ftep farther, which inflamed their enemies in America, and loft them friends in Great-Britain. The great clamor in the provinces was, that the proceedings in the parliament were arbitrary, and unconstitutional. Before they completed their memorable fession in the beginning of the year 1774, they passed an act respecting the government of Quebec, which in the opinion of their friends merited these appellations. By this act the government of that province was made to extend fouthward to the Ohio, and westward to the banks of the Mississippi, and northward, to the boundary of the Hudson's Bay company. The principal objects of the act were to form a legislative council, for all the affairs of the province, except taxation, VOL. I. which which council should be appointed by the crown, to make the office to be held during pleasure, and his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects to be entitled to a place therein—to establish the French laws, and a trial without jury, in civil cases, and the English laws, with a trial by jury, in criminal,—to secure to the Roman Catholic clergy, except the regulars, the legal enjoyment of their estates, and their tythes, from all who were of their own religion. Not only the spirit but the letter of this act were so contrary to the English constitution, that it diminished the popularity of the measures which had been formed against the Americans.

Among the more fouthern colonists, it was conceived that its evident object was to make the inhabitants of Canada fit instruments, in the hands of power, to reduce

them to a state of flavery.

They well remembered the embarrassiments occasioned to them in the late war between France and England, by the French inhabitants of Canada—they supposed that the British administration meant, at this time, to use these people in the same line of attack, for their subjugation. As Great-Britain had new modelled the chartered government of Massachusetts, and claimed an authority so to do in every province, the colonists were apprehensive, that in the plentitude of her power, she would impose on each of them, in their turns, a constitution similar to what she had projected, for the province of Canada.

They foresaw, or thought they foresaw, the annihilation of their ancient assemblies, and their whole legislative bufiness transferred to the creatures of the crown. The legal parliamentary right to a maintenance conferred on the clergy of the Roman Catholic religion, gave great offence to many in England, but the political consequences expected to result from it, were most dreaded by the color

nifts.

They viewed the whole act as an evidence that hostilities were intended against them, and that part of it which respected religion, as calculated to make Roman Catholics subservient to the purposes of military coercion.

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The fession of parliament which passed these memorable acts, had stretched far into summer. As it drew near a close, the most sanguine expectations were indulged, that from the resolution and great unanimity of parliament on all American questions, the submission of the colonies would be immediate, and their suture obedience

and tranquillity effectually secured. The triumphs and congratulations of the friends of ministry, were unasually great.

In passing the acts which have been just mentioned. diffentients in favour of America, were unufually few. The ministerial majority, believing that the refractory colonists depended chiefly on the countenance of their English abettors, were of opinion, that as soon as they received intelligence of the decrease of their friends, and of the decifive conduct of parliament, they would acquiesce in the will of Great-Britain-the fame and grandeur of the nation was fuch, that it was never imagined they would feriously dare to contend with so formidable a people. The late triumphs of Great-Britain had made fuch an impression on her rulers, that they believed the Americans, on feeing the ancient spirit of the nation revive, would not risque a trial of prowess with those fleets and armies, which the combined force of France and Spain, were unable to refift. By an impious confidence in their superior strength, they precipitated the nation into rash measures, from the dire effects of which, the world may learn a uleful leffon.

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## CHAP. IV.

Proceedings of the Colonies in 1774, in consequence of the Boston Port Act, viz.

THE winter which followed the destruction of the tea in Boston, was an anxious one to those of the colonists who were given to reflection. Many conjectures were formed about the line of conduct, Great-Britain would probable adopt, for the support of her dignity. The fears of the most timid were more than realized by the news of the Boston port bill. This arrived on the 10th of May, and its operation was to commence the first of the next month. Various town meetings were called to deliberate on the state of public affairs. On the 13th of May, the town of Boston passed the following vote.

"That it is the opinion of this town, that if the other colonies come into a joint resolution to stop all importation from Great-Britain and the West-Indies, till the act for blocking up this harbour be repealed, the same will

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prove the falvation of North-America, and her liberties. On the other hand if they continue their exports and imports, there is high reason to fear that fraud, power, and the most odious oppression, will rise triumphant over justice, right, social happiness, and freedom. And moreover that this vote, be transmitted by the moderator, to all our sister colonies, in the name and behalf of this town."

Copies of this vote were transmitted to each of the colonies. The opposition to Great-Britain, had hitherto called forth the pens of the ingenious, and in some instances imposed the self-denial of non-importation agreements: but the bulk of the people, had little to do with the dispute. The spirited conduct of the people of Boston, in destroying the tea, and the alarming precedents set by Great-Britain, in consequence thereof, brought subjects into discussion, with which every peasant and day labourer was concerned.

The patriots who had hitherto guided the helm, knew well, that if the other colonies did not support the people of Boston, they must be crushed, and it was equally obvious, that in their coercion a precedent, injurious to liberty, would be established. It was therefore the interest of Boston to draw in the other colonies. It was also the interest of the patriots in all the colonies, to bring over the bulk of the people, to adopt fuch efficient measures as were likely to extricate the inhabitants of Boston, from the unhappy fituation in which they were involved. To effect these purposes much prudence as well as patriotism was necessary. The other provinces were but remotely affected by the fate of Massachusetts. They were happy, and had no cause, on their account, to oppose the government of Great-Britain. That a people fo circumstanced, should take part with a diffressed neighbour, at the risque of incurring the refentment of the Mother Country, did not accord with the felfish maxims by which states, 25 well as individuals, are usually governed. The ruled are, for the most part, prone to fuffer as long as evils are tolerable, and in general they must feel before they are roused to contend with their oppressors; but the Americans acted on a contrary principle. salled to de ile at

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They commenced an opposition to Great-Britain, and ultimately engaged in a defensive war, on speculation. They were not so much moved by oppression actually selt, as by a conviction that a soundation was laid, and a precedent about to be established for suture oppressions.

To convince the bulk of the people, that they had an interest in foregoing a present good, and submitting to a present evil, in order to obtain a future greater good, and to avoid a future greater evil, was the talk affigned to the colonial patriots. But it called for the exertion of their utmost abilities. They effected it in a great measure, by means of the prefs. Pamphlets, effays, addreffes and news paper differtations were daily prefented to the public, proving that Massachusetts was suffering in the common cause. and that interest and policy, as well as good neighbourhood, required the united exertions of all the colonies, in fupport of that much injured province. It was inculcated on the people, that if the ministerial schemes were suffered to take effect in Maffachusetts, the other colonies must expect the loss of their charters, and that a new government would be imposed upon them, like that projected for Quebec. The king and parliament held no patronage in America, fufficient to oppose this torrent, and the few who ventured to write in their favour found a difficulty in communicating their fentiments to the public. No penfions or preferments awaited their exertions. Neglect and contempt were their usual portion, but popularity, confequence, and fame, were the rewards of those who stepped forward in the cause of liberty. In order to interest the great body of people, the few who were at the helm, difclaimed any thing more decifive, than convening the inhabitants, and taking their fense on what was proper to be done. In the mean time great pains were taken to prepare them for the adoption of vigorous measures.

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The words whigs and tories, for want of better, were now introduced, as the diftinguishing names of parties. By the former, were meant those who were for making a common cause with Boston, and supporting the colonies in their opposition to the claims of parliament. By the latter thole who were at least fo far favourers of Great-Britain, that they wished, either that no measures, or only palliative measures should be adopted in opposition to her schemes.

These parties were so nearly balanced in New-York, that nothing more was agreed to at the first meeting of the inhabitants, than a recommendation to call a Congress.

At Philadelphia the patriots had a delicate part to act. The government of the colony being proprietary, a mult titude of officers connected with that interest, had much to fear from convultions, and nothing to expect from a

revolution. A still greater body of people called Quakers, denied the lawfulness of war, and therefore could not adopt such measures for the support of Boston, as naturally tended to produce an event so adverse to their system

The citizens of Boston, not only sent forward their public letter, to the citizens of Philadelphia; but accompanied it with private communications to individuals of

of religion.

known patriotism and influence, in which they stated the impossibility of their standing alone, against the torrent of ministerial vengeance, and the indispensable necessity, that the leading colony of Pennsylvania, should afford them its support and countenance. The advocates in Philadelphia, for making a common cause with Boston, were fully fensible of the state of parties in Pennsylvania. They faw the dispute with Great-Britain, brought to a criss, and a new scene opening, which required exertions different from any heretofore made. The fuccess of these they well knew, depended on the wisdom with which they were planned, and the union of the whole people, in carrying them into execution. They faw the propriety of proceeding with the greatest circumspection; and therefore refolved at their first meeting, on nothing more than to call a general meeting of the inhabitants, on the next evening. At this fecond meeting the patriots had fo much moderation and policy, as to urge nothing decifive, contenting themselves with taking the sense of the inhabitants, fimply on the propriety of fending an answer to the public letter from Boston. This was universally approv-The letter agreed upon was firm but temperate. "They acknowledged the difficulty of offering advice on the present occasion, sympathized with the people of Boston in their diffress, and observed that all lenient measures, for their relief, should be first tried. That if the making restitution for the tea destroyed, would put an end to the unhappy controversy, and leave the people of Boston upon their ancient footing of constitutional liberty, it could not admit of a doubt what part they should act. But that it was not the value of the tea, it was the indefeafible right of giving and granting their own money, which was the matter in confideration. That it was the common cause of America; and therefore necessary in their opinion, that a congress of deputies from the several colonies should be convened to devise means for restoring harmony be-

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tween Great-Britain and the colonies, and preventing matters from coming to extremities. Till this could be brought about, they recommended firmness, prudence, and moderation to the immediate fufferers, affuring them, that the people of Pennfylvania would continue to evince a firm adherence to the cause of American liberty."

In order to awaken the attention of the people, a feries of letters was published, well-calculated to rouse them to a fense of their danger, and point out the fatal confequences of the late acts of parliament. Every newspaper teemed with differtations in favour of liberty-with debates of the members of parliament, especially with the speeches of the favourers of America, and the protests of the diffenting lords. The latter had a particular effect on the colonifts, and were confidered by them as irrefragable proofs, that the late acts against Massachusetts were uncon-

flitutional and arbitrary.

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The minds of the people being thus prepared, the friends of liberty promoted a petition to the governor, for convening the affembly. This they knew would not be granted, and that the refusal of it would smooth the way for calling the inhabitants together. The governor having refused to call the affembly, a general meeting of the inhabitants was requested. About 8000 met and adopted June 18. fundry spirited resolutions. In these they declared, that the Boston port act was unconstitutional—that it was expedient to convene a continental congress—to appoint a committee for the city and county of Philadelphia, to correspond with their fifter colonies and the feyeral counties of Pennfylvania, and to invest that committee with power to determine on the best mode for collecting the fense of the province, and appointing deputies to attend a general congress. Under the fanction of this last resolve, the committee appointed for that purpose, wrote a circular letter to all the counties of the province, requesting them to appoint deputies to a general meeting, propoled to be held on the 15th of July, part of this letter was in the following words: "We would not offer fuch an affront to the well known public spirit of Pennsylvanians, as to question your zeal on the present occasion. Our very existence in the rank of freemen, and the security of all that ought to be dear to us, evidently depends on our conducting this great cause to its proper issue, by firmness, wisdom and magnanimity. It is with pleasure we assure

you,

you, that all the colonies from South-Carolina to New-Hampshire, are animated with one spirit, in the common cause, and consider that as this is the proper criss for having our differences with the Mother Country brought to some certain issue, and our liberties fixed upon a permanent foundation, this desirable end can only be accomplished by a free communication of sentiments, and a sincere and fervent regard for the interests of our common country."

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The several counties readily complied with the request of the inhabitants of Philadelphia, and appointed deputies who met at the time appointed, and passed sundry resolves, in which they reprobated the late acts of parliament—expressed their sympathy with Boston, as suffering in the common cause—approved of holding a congress, and declared their willingness to make any facrifices that

might be recommended by a congress for securing their li-

berties.

Thus, without tumult, disorder, or divided counsels, the whole province of Pennsylvania was, by prudent management and temperate proceedings, brought into the opposition with its whole weight and influence. This is the more remarkable as it is probable, that if the sentiments of individuals had been separately taken, there would have been a majority against involving themselves in the consequences of taking part with the destroyers of the tea, at Boston.

While these proceedings were carrying on in Pennsylvania, three of the most distinguished patriots of Philadelphia, under colour of an excursion of pleasure, made a tour throughout the province, in order to discover the real sentiments of the common people. They were well apprized of the consequences of taking the lead in a dispute which every day became more serious, unless they could depend on being supported by the yeomanry of the country. By freely associating and conversing with many of every class and denomination; they sound them unanimous in that sundamental principle of the American controversy, "That the parliament of Great-Britain had no right to tax them." From their general determination on this subject, a favourable prognostic was formed, of a successful opposition to the claims of Great-Britain.

In Virginia the house of Burgesses on the 26th of May, 1774, resolved, that the first of June, the day on which

the operation of the Boston port bill was to commence. should be fet apart by the members as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, " devoutly to implore the divine interpolition, for averting the heavy calamities which threatened destruction to their civil rights, and the evils of a civil war-to give them one heart and one mind, to oppose by all just and proper means, every injury to American rights." On the publication of this resolution, the royal governor, the Earl of Dunmore diffolyed them. The members notwithstanding their dissolution, met in their private capacities, and figned an agreement, in which among other things, they declared, " that an attack made on one of their fifter colonies, to compel fubmission to arbitrary taxes, was an attack made on all British America, and threatened ruin to the rights of all, unless the united wisdom of the whole be applied."

In South-Carolina the vote of the town of Boston of the 13th of May, being presented to a number of the leading citizens in Charlestown, it was unanimously agreed to

call a meeting of the inhabitants.

That this might be as general as possible, letters were fent to every parish and district in the province, and the people were invited to attend, either personally, or by their representatives at a general meeting of the inhabitants. July 18. A large number affembled, in which were fome, from almost every part of the province. The proceedings of the parliament against the province of Massachusetts were distinctly related to this convention. Without one diffenting voice, they paffed fundry resolutions, expressive of their rights, and of their sympathy with the people of Boston. They also chose five delegates to represent them in a continental Congress, and invested them "with full powers and authority, in behalf of them and their conftituents, to concert, agree to, and effectually to profecute fuch legal measures as in their opinion, and the opinion of the other members, would be most likely to obtain a redrefs of American grievances.

The events of this time may be transmitted to posterity, but the agitation of the public mind can never be fully comprehended, but by those who were witnesses of

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In the counties and towns of the feveral provinces, as well as in the cities, the people affembled and paffed refolutions, expressive of their rights, and of their detestation of the late American acts of parliament. These had

an instantaneous effect on the minds of thousands. Not only the young and impetuous, but the aged and temperate, joined in pronouncing them to be unconstitutional and oppressive They viewed them as deadly weapons aimed at the vitals of that liberty, which they adored; as rendering abortive the generous pains taken by their foresathers, to procure for them in a new world, the quiet enjoyment of their rights. They were the subjects of their meditation when alone, and of their conversation when in company.

Within little more than a month, after the news of the Boston port bill reached America, it was communicated ed from state to state; and a slame was kindled, in almost every breast, through the widely extended provinces.

In order to understand the mode by which this flame was foread with fuch rapidity over fo great an extent of country, it is necessary to observe, that the several colonies, were divided into counties, and these again subdivided into districts, distinguished by the names of towns, townships, precincts, hundreds of parishes. In New: England the fubdivisions which are called towns, were by law, bodies corporate—had their regular meetings, and might be occasionally convened by their proper officers, -The advantages derived from these meetings, by uniting the whole body of the people in the measures taken to oppose the stamp act, induced other provinces to follow the example. Accordingly under the affociation which was formed to oppose the revenue act of 1767, committees were established not only in the capitals of every province, but also in most of the subordinate districts. Great-Britain, without defigning it, had by her two preceding attempts at American revenue, taught her colonies not only the advantages, but the means of union. The fystem of committees, which prevailed in 1765, and also in 1767, was revived in 1774. By them there was a quick transmission of intelligence from the capital towns through the fubordinate districts to the whole body of the people, and an union of councils and measures was effected among widely diffeminated inhabitants.

It is perhaps impossible for human wisdom, to contrive any system more subservient to these purposes, than such a reciprocal exchange of intelligence by committees. From the want of such a communication with each other, and consequently of union among themselves, many states have lost their liberties, and more have been unsuccessful in their attempts to regain them, after they have been lost.

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What the eloquence and talents of Demosthenes could not effect among the states of Greece, might have been effected by the simple device of committees of correspondence. The sew have been enabled to keep the many in subjection in every age, from the want of union among the latter. Several of the provinces of Spain complained of oppression under Charles the 5th, and in transports of rage took arms against him; but they never consulted or communicated with each other. They resisted separately,

and were therefore separately subdued.

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The colonists fympathizing with their distressed brethren in Massachusetts, felt themselves called upon, to do something for their relief; but to determine on what was proper to be done, did not fo obviously occur. It was a natural idea, that for harmonifing their measures, a congress of deputies from each province should be convened. early occurred to all, and being agreed to by all, was the means of procuring union and concert among inhabitants, removed feveral hundred miles from each other. In times less animated, various questions about the place and legality of their meeting, and about the extent of their power, would have produced a great diversity of fentiments; but on this occasion, by the special agency of providence, there was the same universal bent of inclination in the great body of the people. A fense of common danger, extinguished felfish paffions. The public attention was fixed on the great cause of liberty-Local attachments and partialities were facrificed on the altar of patriotism.

There were not wanting moderate men, who would have been willing to pay for the tea destroyed, if that would have put an end to the controversy, for it was not the value of the tea nor of the tax, but the indefensible right of giving and granting their money, for which the colonists contended. The act of parliament was fo cautiously worded, as to prevent the opening of the port of Boston, even though the East-India company had been reimbursed for all damages, " until it was made appear to his majesty in council, that peace and obedience to the laws were fo far restored in the town of Boston, that the trade of Great-Britain might be fafely carried on there and his majesty's customs duly collected." The latter part of this limitation, " the due collection of his majesty's customs," was understood to comprehend submission to the late revenue laws. It was therefore inferred, that payment for the tea destroyed, would produce no certain relief, unless they

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were willing to give operation to the law, for raising 2 revenue on future importations of that commodity, and also to acquiesce in the late mutilation of their charter. As it was deliberately refolved, never to fubmit to either, the most lukewarm of well informed patriots, possessing the public confidence, neither advised nor wished for the adoption of that measure. A few in Boston, who were known to be in the royal interest, proposed a resolution for that purpose, but they met with no support. Of the many who joined the British in the course of the war, there was scarcely an individual to be found in this early stage of the controversy, who advocated the right of parliamentary taxation. There were doubtless many timid persons who fearing the power of Britain, would rather have submitted to her incroachments, than rifque the vengeance of her arms, but fuch for the most part suppressed their sentiments. Zeal for liberty, being immediately rewarded with applause, the patriots had every inducement to come forward, and avow their principles; but there was fomething fo unpopular in appearing to be influenced by timidity, interest or excessive caution, when essential interests were attacked, that fuch persons shunned public notice, and fought the shade of retirement.

In the three first months, which followed the shutting up of the port of Boston, the inhabitants of the colonies in hundreds of small circles, as well as in their provincial assemblies and congresses, expressed their abhorrence of the late proceedings of the British parliament against Massachusetts—their concurrence in the proposed measure of appointing deputies for a general congress, and their willingness to do and suffer whatever should be judged con-

ducive to the establishment of their liberties.

A patriotic flame, created and diffused by the contagion of sympathy, was communicated to so many breasts, and reflected from such a variety of objects, as to become

too intense to be refisted.

While the combination of the other colonies to support Boston, was gaining strength, new matter of dissention daily took place in Massachusetts. The resolution for shutting the port of Boston, was no sooner taken, than it was determined to order a military force to that town. General Gage, the commander in chief of the royal forces in North-America, was also sent thither, in the additional capacity of Governor of Massachusetts. He arrived in Boston on the third day after the inhabitants received

first intelligence of the Boston port bill. Though the people were irritated by that measure, and though their republican jealousy was hurt by the combination of the civil and military character in one person, yet the General was received with all the honours which had been usually paid to his predecessors. Soon after his arrival, two regiments of soot, with a detachment of artillery and some cannon, were landed in Boston. These troops were by degrees re-inforced, with others from Ireland, New-York, Halifax and Quebec.

The Governor announced that he had the King's particular command for holding the general court at Salem, after the first of June. When that eventful day arrived, the act for shutting up the port of Boston commenced its operation. It was devoutly kept at Williamsburgh, as a day of fasting and humiliation. In Philadelphia it was solemnized with every manifestation of public calamity and grief. The inhabitants shut up their houses. After divine service a stillness reigned over the city, which exhi-

bited an appearance of the deepest distress.

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In Boston a new scene opened on the inhabitants. Hitherto, that town had been the feat of commerce and of plenty. The immense business carried on therein. afforded a comfortable subsistence to many thousands. The necessary—the useful, and even some of the elegant arts were cultivated among them. The citizens were polite and hospitable. In this happy state they were sentenced on the short notice of twenty-one days, to a total deprivation of all means of fubfifting. The blow reached every person. The rents of the landholders, either ceased or were greatly diminished. The immense property in stores and wharfs, was rendered comparatively useless. Labourers, artificers and others, employed in the numerods occupations created by an extensive trade, partook in the general calamity. They who depended on a regular income, flowing from previous acquisitions of property, as well as they who with the fweat of their brow. earned their daily subfistence, were equally deprived of the means of support; and the chief difference between them, was that the diffresses of the former were rendered more intolerable by the recollection of past enjoyments. All these inconveniencies and hardships, were borne with a passive, but inflexible fortitude. Their determination to perfift in the same line of conduct, which had been the occasion of their suffering was unabated.

The

The authors and advisers of the resolution for destroying the tea, were in the town, and still retained their popularity and influence. The executions of the inhabitants fell not on them, but on the British Parliament. Their countrymen acquitted them of all selfish designs, and believed that in their opposition to the measures of Great-Britain, they were actuated by an honest zeal for constitutional liberty. The sufferers in Boston had the consolation of sympathy from the other colonists. Contributions were raised in all quarters for their relies. Letters and addresses came to them from corporate bodies, town meetings and provincial conventions, applauding their conduct, and exhorting them to perseverance.

The people of Marblehead, who by their proximity were likely to reap advantage from the distresses of Bolton, generously offered the merchants thereof, the use of their harbour, wharfs, warehouses, and also their personal attendance on the lading or unlading of their goods free

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The inhabitants of Salem in an address to governor Gage, concluded with these remarkable words, "By shuting up the port of Boston, some imagine that the course of trade might be turned hither, and to our benefit: But nature in the formation of our harbour, forbid our becoming rivals in commerce with that convenient mart; and were it otherwise, we must be dead to every idea of justice, lost to all feelings of humanity, could we indulge one thought to seize on wealth, and raise our fortunes on the ruins of our suffering neighbours."

The Massachusetts general court met at Salem, according to adjournment, on the 7th of June. Several of the popular leaders took, in a private way, the sense of the members on what was proper to be done. Finding they were able to carry such measures as the public exigencies required, they prepared resolves and moved for their adoption. But before they went on the latter business, their

door was shut.

One member nevertheless contrived means of sending information to Governor Gage of what was doing. His secretary was sent off to dissolve the general court, but was refused admission. As he could obtain no entrance, he read the proclamation at the door, and immediately after in council, and thus dissolved the general court. The house while sitting with their doors shut, appointed sive of the most respectable inhabitants as their committee, to meet

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meet committees from other provinces, that might be convened the first of September at Philadelphia-voted them 75 pounds sterling each, and recommended to the feveral towns and diffricts to raife the faid fum by equitable proportions. By these means the designs of the governor were disappointed. His situation in every respect was truly disagreeable. It was his duty to forward the execution of laws which were univerfally execrated. Zeal for his mafter's fervice, prompted him to endeavour that they should be carried into full effect, but his progress was retarded by obstacles from every quarter. He had to transact his official business with a people who possessed a high fense of liberty, and were uncommonly ingenious in evading disagreeable acts of parliament. It was a part of his duty to prevent the calling of the town meetings after the first of August, 1774. These meetings were nevertheless held. On his proposing to exert authority for the dispersion of the people, he was told by the felect men, that they had not offended against the act of parliament, for that only prohibited the calling of town meetings, and that no fuch call had been made: A former constitutional meeting before the first of August, having only adjourned themselves from time to time. Other evafions, equally founded on the letter, of even the late obnoxious laws, were practifed.

As the fummer advanced, the people of Massachusetts received stronger proofs of support from the neighbouring provinces. They were therefore encouraged to farther opposition. The inhabitants of the colonies, at this time, with regard to political opinions might be divided into three classes ;-of these, one was for rushing precipitately into extremities. They were for immediately stopping all trade, and could not even brook the delay of waiting till the proposed continental congress should meet. Another party, equally respectable, both as to character, property and patriotism, was more moderate, but not less firm. These were averse to the adoption of any violent refolutions, till all others were ineffectually tried, wished that a clear statement of their rights, claims, and grievances, should precede every other measure. A third class disapproved of what was generally going on. A few from principle, and a perfuafion that they ought to submit to the Mother Country; -- fome from the love of eale, others from felf-interest, but the bulk from fear of the mischievous mischievous consequences likely to follow: All these latter classes, for the most part, lay still, while the friends of liberty acted with spirit. If they, or any of them, ventured to oppose popular measures, they were not supported, and therefore declined farther efforts. The resentment of the people was so strong against them, that they sought for peace by remaining quiet. The same indecision that made them willing to submit to Great-Britain, made them apparently acquiesce in popular measures which they disapproved. The spirited part of the community, being on the side of liberty, the patriots had the appearance of unanimity; though many either kept at a distance from public meetings, or voted against their own opinion, to secure themselves from resentment, and promote their present ease and interest.

Under the influence of those who were for the immediate adoption of efficacious measures, an agreement by the name of the solemn league and covenant, was adopted by numbers. The subscribers of this, bound themseves to suspend all commercial intercourse with Great-Britain, until the late obnoxious laws were repealed, and the colony of Massachusetts restored to its chartered rights.

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General Gage published a proclamation, in which he stilled this solemn league and covenant, "An unlawful, hostile, and traitorous combination." And all magistrates were charged, to apprehend and secure for trial, such as should have any agency in publishing or subscribing the same, or any similar covenant. This proclamation had no other effect, than to exercise the pens of the lawyers, in shewing that the association did not come within the description of legal treason, and that therefore the governor's proclamation was not warranted by the principles of the constitution.

The late law, for regulating the government of the provinces, arrived near the beginning of August, and was accompanied with a list of 36 new counsellors, appointed by the crown, and in a mode, variant from that prescribed by the charter. Several of these in the first instance, declined an acceptance of the appointment. Those, who accepted of it, were every where declared to be enemies to their country. The new judges were rendered incapable of proceeding in their official duty. Upon opening the courts, the juries resuled to be sworn, or to act in any manner, either under them, or in conformity to the late regulations.

June 29.

regulations. In fome places, the people affembled, and filled the court-houses and avenues to them in such a manner, that neither the judges nor their officers could obtain entrance; and upon the sheriff's commanding them to make way for the court, they answered, " That they knew no court independent of the ancient laws of their country, and to none other would they fubmit."

In imitation of his royal mafter, Governor Gage iffued August 4. a proclamation " for the encouragement of piety and virtue, and for the prevention and punishing vice, prophaneness and immorality." In this proclamation, hypocrify was inferted as one of the immoralities against which the people were warned. This was confidered by the inhabitants, who had often been ridiculed for their strict attention to the forms of religion, to be a studied infult, and as fuch was more refented than an actual injury. It greatly added to the inflammation which had already taken place in their minds.

The proceedings and apparent dispositions of the people, together with the military preparations which were daily made through the province, induced General Gage to fortify that neck of land which joins Boston to the continent,

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He also seized upon the powder which was lodged in the arfenal at Charlestown.

This excited a most violent and universal ferment. Se- Sept. 1. veral thousands of the people affembled at Cambridge, and it was with difficulty they were restrained from marching directly to Boston, to demand a delivery of the powder, with a refolution in case of refusal to attack the

The people thus affembled, proceeded to Lieutenant Governor Oliver's house, and to the houses of several of the new counsellors, and obliged them to refign, and to declare that they would no more act under the laws ately enacted. In the confusion of these transactions a rumour went abroad, that the royal fleet and troops were firing upon the town of Boston. This was probably deigned by the popular leaders, on purpose to ascertain what aid they might expect from the country in case of extremities. The refult exceeded their most fanguine expectations. In less than twenty four hours, there were spwards of 30,000 men in arms, and marching towards he capital. Other rifings of the people took place in lifferent parts of the colony, and their violence was uch, that in a short time the new counsellors, the com-VOL. I. missioners

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missioners of the customs, and all who had taken an active part in favour of Great-Britain, were obliged to skreen themselves in Boston. The new seat of government at Salem was abandoned, and all the officers connected with the revenue were obliged to consult their safety, by taking up their residence in a place which an act of parlia-

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ment had proferibed from all trade.

About this time delegates from every town and district in the county of Suffolk, of which Boston is the county town, had a meeting, at which they prefaced a number of spirited resolutions, containing a detail of the particulars of their intended opposition to the late acts of parliament, with a general declaration, "That no obedience was due from the province to either, or any part of the said acts, but that they should be rejected at the attempts of a wicked administration to enslave America." The resolves of this meeting were sent on to Philadelphia, for the information and opinion of the Congress, which, as shall be hereafter related, had met there about this time.

The people of Maffachusetts rightly judged, that from the decision of Congress on these resolutions, they would be enabled to determine what support they might exped Notwithstanding present appearances they feared that the other colonies, who were no more than remotely concerned, would not hazard the confequences of makings common cause with them, should subsequent events make it necessary to repel force by force. The decision of Congress exceeded their expectations. They " most the roughly approved the wifdom and fortitude with which opposition to wicked ministerial measures had been hithern conducted in Maffachusetts, and recommended to them perseverance in the same firm and temperate conducta expressed in the resolutions of the delegates from the county of Suffolk." By this approbation and advice, the people of Massachusetts were encouraged to refistance, and the other colonies became bound to support them. The former more in need of a bridle than a four, proceeded as they had begun, but with additional confidence.

Governor Gage had iffued writs for holding a General Affembly at Salem; but subsequent events, and the her and violence which every where prevailed, made him think it expedient to counteract the writs by a proclamation for suspending the meeting of the members. The legality of a proclamation for that purpose was denied

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and in defiance thereof 90 of the newly-elected members 1774. met at the time and place appointed. They foon after resolved themselves into a provincial Congress, and adjourned to Concord, about 20 miles from Charlestown. On their meeting there, they chose Mr. Hancock president, and proceeded to business. One of their first acts was to appoint a committee to wait on the Governor, with a remonstrance, in which they apologised for their meeting, from the diffreffed state of the colony; -complained of their grievances, and, after stating their apprehensions, from the hostile preparations on Boston neck, concluded with an earnest request, "That he would defist from the construction of the fortress at the entrance into Boston, and restore that pass to its natural state." The Governor found some difficulty in giving them an answer, as they were not, in his opinion, a legal body, but the necessity of the times over-ruled his fcruples. He replied, by expreffing his indignation at the supposition, " That the lives, liberties or property of any people, except enemies, could be in danger, from English troops." He reminded them, that while they complained of alterations made in their charter, by acts of parliament, they were by their own acts fubverting it altogether. He therefore warned them of the rocks they were upon, and to defift from fuch illegal and unconstitutional proceedings. The Governor's admonitions were unavailing. The provincial Congress appointed a committee to draw up a plan for the immediate defence of the province. It was refolved to inlift a number of the inhabitants under the name of minute men, who were to be under obligations to turn out at a minute's warning. Jedediah Pribble, Artemas Ward and Seth Pomeroy, were elected general officers to command those minute men and the militia, in case they should be called out to action. A committee of fafety and a committee of supplies were appointed. These consisted of different persons and were intended for different purposes. The first were invested with an authority to affemble the militia when they thought proper, and were to recommend to the committee of supplies the purchase of such articles as the public exigencies required; -the last were limited to the small sum of f. 15,627, 15s. sterl, which was all the money at first voted to oppose the power and riches of Great-Britain. Under this authority, and with these means, the committees of safety and of supplies, effing in concert, laid in a quantity of stores, partly at Worcester and partly at Concord.—The same Congress Nov. 23.

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1774. met again, and foon after resolved to get in readiness twelve thousand men to act on any given emergency; and that a fourth part of the militia should be inlisted as minute men and receive pay. John Thomas and Wil. liam Heath were appointed general officers. They also fent perfons to New-Hampshire, Rhode-Island and Con. necticut, to inform them of the steps they had taken, and to request their co-operation in making up an army of 20,000 men. Committees from these several colonies met with a committee from the provincial Congress of Massa. chusetts, and settled their plans. The proper period of commencing opposition to General Gage's troops, was determined to be whenever they marched out with their bag. gage, ammunition and artillery. The aid of the clergy was called in upon this occasion, and a circular letter was addressed to each of the several ministers in the province. requesting their assistance " in avoiding the dreadful slavery with which they were threatened.

> As the winter approached, General Gage ordered barracks for his troops to be erected, but such was the superior influence of the popular leaders, that on their recommendation the workmen desisted from sulfilling the General's wishes, though the money for their labour would

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An application to New-York was equally unfucces ful, and it was with difficulty that the troops could be furnished with winter lodgings .- Similar obstructions were thrown in the way of getting winter covering for the foldiery. The merchants of New-York on being applied to, answered, " That they would never supply any article for the benefit of men who were fent as enemies to the country. The inhabitants of Massachusetts encouraged the defertion of the foldiers; and acted systemtically in preventing their obtaining any other supplies but necessary provisions. The farmers were discouraged from felling them ftraw, timber, boards and fuch like atticles of convenience. Straw, when purchased for their fervice, was frequently burnt. Veffels, with bricks intended for their use, were funk, and carts with wood were overturned, and the king's property by one contrivance or other, was daily destroyed.

A proclamation had been iffued by the king, prohibiting the exportation of military stores from Britain, which reached America in the latter end of the year 1774 On receiving intelligence thereof, in Rhode-Island, the per-

and partly at Concerd, - The fame Congrels Nov.

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ple seized upon and removed from the public battery about 40 pieces of cannon; and the affembly paffed resolutions for obtaining arms and military stores by every means, and alfo for raifing and arming the inhabitants :- foon after 400 men beset his Majesty's castle at Portsmouth. They suf- Dec. 14. tained a fire from three four-pounders and small arms, but before they could be ready for a fecond fire, the affailants formed the fort, and fecured and confined the garrison till they broke open the powder house, and took the powder away.—The powder being secured, the garrison was released from confinement.

Throughout this whole feafon, civil government, legiflation, judicial proceedings and commercial regulations were in Maffachusetts, to all appearance annihilated. The provincial Congress exercised all the semblance of government which existed. From their coincidence with the prevailing disposition of the people, their resolutions had the weight and efficacy of laws. Under the simple stile of recommendation, they organized the militia, made ordinances respecting public monies and such farther regulations as were necessary for preserving order, and for defending

themselves against the British troops.

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In this crifis it seemed to be the sense of the inhabitants of Massachusetts to wait events. They dreaded every evil that could flow from resistance, less than the operation of the late acts of parliament, but at the same time were averse to be the aggreffors in bringing on a civil war. chose to submit to a suspension of regular government, in preference to permitting the streams of justice to flow in the channel prescribed by the late acts of parliament, or to conducting them forcibly in the old one, fanctioned by their charter. From the extinction of the old, and the rejection of the new constitution, all regular government was for several months abolished. Some hundred thoufands of people were in a state of nature without legislation, magistrates, or executive officers: there was nevertheless a surprising degree of order. Men of the purest morals were among the most active opposers of Great-Britain. While municipal laws ceased to operate, the laws of reason, morality and religion, bound the people to each other as a focial band, and preferved as great a degree of decorum as had at any time prevailed. Even those who were opposed to the proceedings of the populace when they were prudent and moderate, for the most part enjoyed fafety both at home and abroad,

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Though there were no civil officers, there was an abundance of military ones. These were chosen by the people, but exercised more authority than any who had been honoured with commissions from the governor. The inhabitants in every place devoted themselves to arms. Handling the musket, and training, were the fashionable amusements of the men, while the women by their presence, encouraged them to proceed. The sound of drums and sies was to be heard in all directions. The young and the old were fired with a martial spirit. On experiment it was found, that to force on the inhabitants, a form of government, to which they were totally averse, was not within

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the fancied omnipotence of parliament.

During these transactions in Massachusetts effectual measures had been taken by the colonies for convening a continental Congress. Though there was no one entitled to lead in this bufinels, yet in confequence of the general impulse on the public mind, from a fense of common danger, not only the measure itself, but the time and place of meeting, were with furprifing unanimity agreed upon. The colonies though formerly agitated with local prejudices, jealoufies and averfions, were led to affemble together in a general diet, and to feel their weight and importance in a common union. Within four months from the day on which the first intelligence of the Boston port bill reached America, the deputies of eleven provinces had convened in Philadelphia, and in four days more, by the arrival of delegates from North-Carolina, there was a complete representation of twelve colonies, containing three millions of people, diffeminated over 260,000 fquare miles of territory. Some of the delegates were appointed by the constitutional assemblies; in other provinces, where they were embarraffed by royal governors, the appointments were made in voluntary meetings of the people. Perhaps there never was a body of delegates more faithful to the interest of their constituents than the Congress of 1774 The public voice elevated none to a feat in that august alfembly, but fuch as in addition to confiderable abilities, possessed that ascendancy over the minds of their fellow citizens, which can neither be acquired by birth nor purchased by wealth. The instructions given to these deputies were various, but in general they contained strong professions of loyalty, and of constitutional dependence on the mother country .- The framers of them acknowledged the prerogatives of the crown, and disclaimed every wish

of separation from the parent State. On the other hand, they were firm in declaring that they were entitled to all the rights of British born subjects, and that the late acts respecting Massachusetts were unconstitutional and oppreffive.

They particularly flated their grievances, and for the most part concurred in authorising their deputies to concert and agree to fuch measures in behalf of their constituents, as in their joint opinion would be most likely to obtain a redress of American grievances, ascertain American rights, on conftitutional principles, and establish union and harmony between Great-Britain and her colonies. various instructions, on this occasion, those which were drawn up by a convention of delegates, from every county in the province of Pennsylvania, and presented by them in a body to the constitutional assembly, were the most precise and determinate. By these it appears, that the Pennsylvanians were disposed to submit to the acts of navigation, as they then stood, and also to settle a certain annual revenue on his majesty, his heirs and successors, subject to the controul of parliament, and to fatisfy all damages done to the East-India company, provided their grievances were redresfed, and an amicable compact was fettled, which, by effablishing American rights in the manner of a new Magna Charta, would have precluded future disputes.

Of the whole number of deputies, which formed the Continental Congress of 1774, one half were lawyers. Gentlemen of that profession had acquired the confidence of the inhabitants by their exertions in the common cause. The previous measures in the respective provinces had been planned and carried into effect, more by lawyers than by any other order of men. Professionally taught the rights of the people, they were among the foremost to descry every attack made on their liberties. Bred in the habits of public speaking, they made a distinguished figure in the meetings of the people, and were particularly able to explain to them the tendency of the late acts of parliament. Exerting their abilities and influence in the cause of their

country, they were rewarded with its confidence.

On the meeting of Congress, they chose Peyton Randolph their prefident, and Charles Thomson their fecretary. They agreed as one of the rules of their doing bufiness, that no entry should be made on their journals of any propolitions discussed before them, to which they did not finally

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This august body, to which all the colonies looked un for wisdom and direction, had scarcely convened, when a dispute arose about the mode of conducting business, which alarmed the friends of union. It was contended by fome. that the votes of the small provinces should not count as much as those of the larger ones. This was argued with fome warmth, and invidious comparisons were made between the extensive dominion of Virginia, and the small colonies of Delaware and Rhode-Island. The impossibility of fixing the comparative weight of each province, from the want of proper materials, induced Congress to refolve, that each should have one equal vote. The mode of conducting business being settled, two committees were appointed. One, to state the rights of the colonies, the feveral instances in which these rights had been violated, and the means most proper to be purfued for obtaining a restoration of them; the other, to examine and report the feveral statutes which affected the trade and manufactures of the colonies. The first committee were farther instructed to confine themselves to the consideration of such rights as had been infringed fince the year 1763.

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Congress soon after their meeting, agreed upon a declaration of their rights, by which it was among other things declared, that the inhabitants of the English colonies in North-America, by the immutable laws of nature,—the principles of the English constitution, and the several charters or compacts, were intitled to life, liberty and property; and that they had never ceded to any fovereign power whatever, a right to dispose of either, without their confent. That their ancestors, who first settled the colonies were intitled to all the rights, liberties and immunities of free and natural born subjects within the realm of England, and that by their migrating to America, they by no means forfeited, furrendered or loft any of those rights ;-that the foundation of English liberty, and of all free government was, a right in the people to participate in their legislative council, and that as the English colonists were not, and could not be properly represented in the British parliament, they were intitled to a free and exclusive power of legislation in their feveral provincial legislatures, in all cases of taxation and internal policy, subject only to the negative of their fovereign. They then run the line, between the fupremacy of parliament, and the independency of the colonial legislatures by provisoes and restrictions, expresed in the following words. "But from the necessity of the case, and a regard to the mutual interests of both countries, we cheerfully confent to the operation of fuch acts of the British parliament, as are bona fide, restrained to the regulation of our external commerce, for the purpole of fecuring the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the Mother Country, and the commercial benefits of its respective members, excluding every idea of taxation, internal and external for raising a revenue on the sub-

iects in America without their confent."

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This was the very hinge of the controversy. The abfolute unlimited supremacy of the British parliament, both in legislation and taxation, was contended for on one fide; while on the other, no farther authority was conceded than fuch a limited legislation, with regard to external commerce, as would combine the interest of the whole empire. In government, as well as in religion, there are mysteries from the close investigation of which little advantage can be expected. From the unity of the empire it was neceffary, that fome acts should extend over the whole. From the local fituation of the colonies it was equally reasonable that their legislatures should at least in some matters be independent. Where the supremacy of the first ended and the independency of the last began, was to the best informed a puzzling question. Happy would it have been for both countries, had the discussion of this doubtful point never been attempted.

Congress also resolved, that the colonists were entitled to the common law of England, and more especially to the privilege of being tried by their peers of the vicinage. That they were entitled to the benefit of fuch of the English statutes as existed at the time of their colonization, and which they had found to be applicable to their local circumstances, and also to the immunities and privileges granted and confirmed to them by royal charters or fecured by provincial laws-That they had a right peaceably to affemble, -consider of their grievances, and petition the king;-that the keeping a standing army in the colonies, without the confent of the legislature of the colony where the army was kept, was against law-That it was indispentibly necessary to good government, and rendered effential by the English constitution, that the constituent branches of the legislature be independent of each other, and that therefore, the exercise of legislative power, in seyeral colonies by a council appointed during pleafure by the crown, was unconstitutional, dangerous and destructive to

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the freedom of American legislation. All of these liberties. Congress in behalf of themselves and their constituents. claimed, demanded and infifted upon as their indubitable rights, which could not be legally taken from them, altered or abridged by any power whatever, without their confent. Congress then resolved, that fundry acts, which had been passed in the reign of George the Third, were infringements and violations of the rights of the colonists, and that the repeal of them was effentially necessary, in order to restore harmony between Great-Britain and the colonies. The acts complained of, were as follow: The feveral acts of 4 George III. ch. 15 and ch. 34-5 Geo. III. ch. 25-6 Geo. III. ch. 52-7 Geo. III. ch. 41 and ch. 46 -8 Geo. III. ch. 22 which imposed duties for the purpose of raising a revenue in America,-extended the power of the admiralty courts beyond their ancient limits, deprived the American subject of trial by jury, -authorized the judges certificate to indemnify the profecutor from damages, that he might otherwise be liable to, and required oppressive security from a claimant of ships and goods feized before he was allowed to defend his property.

Also 12 Geo. III. ch. 24. entiled, "An act for the better securing his majesty's dock yards, magazines, ships, ammunition and stores," which declares a new offence in America, and deprives the American subject of a constitutional trial by jury of the vicinage, by authorizing the trial of any person charged with the committing any offence described in the said act out of the realm, to be indicted and tried for the same in any shire or county with-

in the realm.

Also the three acts passed in the last session of parliament for stopping the port and blocking up the harbour of Boston,—for altering the charter and government of Masfachusetts Bay, and that which is entitled, "An act for

the better administration of justice, &c."

Also the act passed in the same session, for establishing the Roman Catholic religion in the province of Quebec, abolishing the equitable system of English laws, and eresting a tyranny there to the great danger (from so total a dissimilarity of religion, law and government) of the neighbouring British colonies, by the assistance of whose blood and treasure the said country had been conquered from France.

Also the act passed in the same session, for the better providing suitable quarters for officers and soldiers in his

majesty's service in North-America.

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Also the keeping a standing army in several of these colonies in time of peace, without the confent of the legiflature of that colony in which fuch army was kept,

was affirmed to be against law.

Congress declared, that they could not submit to these grievous acts and measures. In hopes that their fellow subjects in Great-Britain would restore the colonies to that flate in which both countries found happiness and prosperity, they refolved for the present only to pursue the following peaceable measures: 1st, To enter into a non-importation, non-confumption and non-exportation agreement or affociation; 2d, To prepare an address to the people of Great-Britain, and a memorial to the inhabitants of British America; and 3dly, to prepare a loyal address

to his majesty.

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By the affociation they bound themselves and their conflituents, " from and after the 1st day of December next, not to import into British America, from Great-Britain or Ireland, any goods, wares or merchandize, whatfoever; not to purchase any flave, imported after the said first day of December; -not to purchase or use any tea, imported on account of the East-India company, or any on which a duty hath been or shall be paid; and from and after the first day of the next ensuing March, neither to purchase or use any East-India tea whatever. - That they would not after the tenth day of the next September, if their grievances were not previously redressed, export any commodity whatfoever, to Great-Britain, Ireland or the West-Indies, except rice to Europe.—That the merchants should as soon as possible, write to their correspondents in Great-Britain and Ireland, not to ship any goods to them on any pretence whatever; and if any merchant there, should ship any goods for America, in order to contravene the non-importation agreement, they would not afterwards have any commercial connexion with fuch merchant; that fuch as were owners of veffels, should give positive orders to their captains and masters, not to receive on board their veffels, any goods prohibited by the faid non-importation agreement; that they would use their endeavours to improve the breed of sheep and increase their numbers to the greatest extent; that they would encourage frugality, economy and industry, and promote agriculture, arts and American manufactures; that they would discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and diffipation, and that on the death of relations

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relations or friends, they would wear no other mourning than a fmall piece of black crape or ribbon; that fuch as were venders of goods, should not take any advantage of the scarcity so as to raise their prices; that if any person should import goods after the first day of December, and before the first day of February, then next ensuing, the same ought to be immediately reshipped or delivered up to a committee to be stored or fold : in the last case, all the clear profits to be applied towards the relief of the inhabitants of Boston; and that if any goods should be imported after the first day of February, then next enfuing, they should be sent back without breaking any of the packages; that committees be chosen in every county, city and town, to observe the conduct of all persons touch. ing the affociation, and to publish in gazettes, the names of the violaters of it, as foes to the rights of British America; that the committees of correspondence in the respective colonies frequently inspect the entries of their custom houses, and inform each other from time to time of the true state thereof; that all manufactures of America should be fold at reasonable prices; and no advantages be taken of a future scarcity of goods; and lastly, that they would have no dealings or intercourse whatsoever, with any province or colony of North-America, which should not accede to, or should violate the aforesaid affociations." These several resolutions, they bound themselves and their constituents, by the facred ties of virtue, honour and love of their country, to observe till their grievances were redreffed.

In their address to the people of Great-Britain they complimented them for having at every hazard maintained their independence, and transmitted the rights of man and the bleffings of liberty to their posterity, and requested them not to be surprised, that they who were descended from the same common ancestors, should refuse to surrender their rights, liberties and constitution. They proceeded to state their rights and their grievances, and to vindicate themselves from the charges of being seditious, impatient of government and desirous of independency. They summed up their wishes in the following words, Place us in the same situation that we were, at the close of the last war, and our former harmony will be restored."

In the memorial of Congress to the inhabitants of the British colonies, they recapitulated the proceedings of Great-Britain against them, since the year 1763, in order

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to impress them with a belief, that a deliberate system was formed for abridging their liberties. They then proceeded to flate the measures, they had adopted to counteract this fustem, and gave the reasons which induced them to adopt the fame. They encouraged them to fubmit to the inconveniencies of non-importation and non-exportation by defiring them " to weigh in the opposite balance the endless miseries, they and their descendants must endure from an established arbitrary power." They concluded with informing them "that the schemes agitated against the colonies, had been fo conducted as to render it prudent to extend their views to mournful events, and to be in all re-

fpects prepared for every contingency."

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In the petition of Congress to the king, they begged leave to lay their grievances before the throne. After a particular enumeration of these, they observed that they wholly arose from a destructive system of colonial administration, adopted fince the conclusion of the last war. They affured his majesty that they had made such provifion for defraying the charges of the administration of justice, and the support of civil government, as had been judged just and suitable to their respective circumstances, and that for the defence, protection and fecurity of the colonies, their militia would be fully sufficient in time of peace, and in case of war they were ready and willing, when constitutionally required, to exert their most strenuous efforts in granting supplies and raising forces. They faid, "we ask but for peace, liberty and safety. We wish not a diminution of the prerogative, nor do we solicit the grant of any new right in our favour. Your royal authority over us, and our connexion with Great-Britain, we shall always carefully and zealously endeavour to support and maintain." They then solicited for a redress of their grievances which they had enumerated, and appealing to that Being, who fearches thoroughly the hearts of his creatures, they folemnly professed, "that their counfels had been influenced by no other motives, than a dread of impending destruction." They concluded with imploring his Majesty, "for the honour of Almighty God, for his own glory, for the interests of his family, for the fafety of his kingdoms and dominions, that as the loving father of his whole people, connected by the fame bonds of law, loyalty, faith and blood, though dwelling in various countries, he would not fuffer the transcendant relation formed by these ties, to be farther violated by uncertain tain expectation of effects, that if attained never could compensate for the calamities through which they must be

gained."

The Congress also addressed the French inhabitants of Canada. In this they stated the right they had on becoming English subjects, to the benefits of the English constitution. They explained what these rights were, and pointed out the difference between the constitution imposed on them by act of parliament, and that to which as British subjects they were entitled. They introduced their countryman Montesquieu, as reprobating their parliamentary constitution, and exhorting them to join their fellow colonists in support of their common rights. They earnessly invited them to join with the other colonies in one social compact, formed on the generous principles of equal liberty, and to this end recommended, that they would chuse delegates to represent them in Congress.

All these addresses were written with uncommon ability. Coming from the heart, they were calculated to move it. Inspired by a love of liberty, and roused by a sense of common danger, the patriots of that day spoke, wrote and acted, with an animation unknown in times of public tranquillity; but it was not fo much on the probable effect of these addresses, that Congress sounded their hopes of obtaining a redrefs of their grievances, as on the confequences which they expected from the operation of their non-importation, and non-exportation agreement. fuccess that had followed the adoption of a measure similar to the former, in two preceding instances, had encouraged the colonists to expect much from a repetition of it. I'hey indulged, in extravagant opinions of the importance of their trade to Great-Britain. The measure of a non-exportation of their commodities was a new expedient, and from that, even more was expected than from the non-importation agreement. They supposed that it would produce fuch extensive diffress among the merchants and manufacturers of Great-Britain, and elpecially among the inhabitants of the British West-India islands, as would induce their general co-operation in procuring a redrefs of American grievances. Events proved that young nations, like young people, are prone to over rate their own importance.

October,

Congress having finished all this important business, in less than eight weeks, dissolved themselves after giving their opinion, "that another Congress should be held d

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on the 10th of May next ensuing at Philadelphia, unless the redress of their grievances should be previously obtained," and recommending "to all the colonies to chuse deputies as soon as possible, to be ready to attend at that time and place, should events make their meeting neces-

On the publication of the proceedings of Congress, the people obtained that information which they defired. Zealous to do something for their country, they patiently waited for the decision of that body, to whose direction they had religned themselves. Their determinations were no fooner known, than they were chearfully obeyed. Though their power was only advisory, yet their recommendations were more generally and more effectually carried into execution, than the laws of the best regulated states. Every individual felt his liberties endangered, and was impressed with an idea, that his safety consisted in union. A common interest in warding off a common danger, proved a powerful incentive to the most implicit submission; -provincial Congresses and subordinate committees were every where instituted. The resolutions of the Continental Congress, were fanctioned with the universal approbation of these new representative bodies, and institutions were formed under their direction to carry them into effect.

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The regular conflitutional affemblies also gave their affent to the measures recommended. The affembly of New-York, was the only legislature which withheld its approbation. Their metropolis had long been head quarters of the British army in the colonies, and many of their best families were connected with people of influence in Great-Britain. The unequal distribution of their land, softered an aristocratic spirit. From the operation of these and other causes, the party for royal government, was both more numerous and respectable in New-York, than in any of the other colonies.

The affembly of Pennfylvania, though composed of a majority of Quakers, or of those who were friendly to their interest, was the first legal body of representatives that ratified unanimously the acts of the general Congress. They not only voted their approbation of what that body had done, but appointed members to represent them in

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the new Congress, proposed to be held on the 10th day of May next ensuing, and took fundry steps to put the pro-

vince in a posture of defence.

To relieve the diffresses of the people of Boston, liberal collections were made throughout the colonies, and forwarded for the supply of their immediate necessities. Domestic manufactures were encouraged, that the wants of the inhabitants from the non-importation agreement might be diminished, and the greatest zeal was disco. vered by a large majority of the people, to comply with the determinations of these new made representative bodies. In this manner, while the forms of the old government subsisted, a new and independent authority was virtually established. It was so universally the sense of the people, that the public good required a compliance with the recommendations of Congress, that any man who discovered an anxiety about the continuance of trade and business, was considered as a selfish individual, preferring private interest to the good of his country. Under the influence of these principles, the intemperate zeal of the populace, transported them frequently so far beyond the limits of moderation, as to apply fingular punishments to particular persons, who contravened the general sense of the community.

The British ministry were not less disappointed than mortified at this unexpected combination of the colonies, They had flattered themselves with a belief, that the malcontents in Boston were a small party headed by a few factious men, and that the majority of the inhabitants would arrange themselves on the side of government, as foon as they found Great-Britain determined to support her authority, and should even Massachusetts take part with its offending capital, they could not believe that the other colonies would make a common cause in supporting fo intemperate a colony: but should even that expectation fail, they conceived that their affociation must be founded on principles so adverse to the interests and feelings of individuals, that it could not be of long duration. They were encouraged in these ill founded opinions by the recollection that the colonies were frequently quar-

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policy, manners, customs, forms of government and religion, and under the influence of a variety of local preindices, jealousies and aversions. They also remembered the obstacles which prevented the colonies from acting together, in the execution of schemes, planned for their own defence, in the late war against the French and Indians. The failure of the expected co-operation of the colonies in one uniform fystem at that time, was not only urged by the British ministry, as a reason for the parliamentary control over the whole, but flattered them with a delufive hope, that they never could be brought to combine their counfels and their arms. Perhaps the colonists apprehended more danger from British encroachments on their liberties, than from French encroachment on Indian territories, in their neighbourhood; or more probably the time to part being come, the Governor of the Universe, by a secret influence on their minds, disposed them to union. From whatever cause it proceeded, it is certain, that a disposition to do, to suffer, and to accommodate, spread from breast to breast, and from colony to colony, beyond the reach of human calculation. It feemed as though one mind inspired the whole. The merchants put far behind them the gains of trade, and cheerfully fubmitted to a total stoppage of business, in obedience to the recommendations of men, invested with no legislative powers. The cultivators of the foil, with great unanimity affented to the determination, that the hard earned produce of their farms, should remain unshipped, although in case of a free exportation, many would have been eager to have purchased it from them, at advanced prices. The fons and daughters of ease, renounced imported conveniencies, and voluntarily engaged to eat, drink, and wear, only fuch articles as their country afford-

This feason of universal distress, exhibited a striking proof, how practicable it is for mankind to facrifice ease, pleasure, and interest, when the mind is strongly excited by its passions. In the midst of their sufferings, cheer-inless appeared in the face of all the people. They Vol. I.

ed. These facrifices were made, not from the pressure of

present distress, but on the generous principle of sympa-

thy, with an invaded fifter colony, and the prudent policy

of guarding against a precedent which might, in a future

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counted every thing cheap in comparison with liberty, and readily gave up whatever tended to endanger it. A noble strain of generosity and mutual support was generally excited. A great and powerful diffusion of public spirit took place. The animation of the times, raised the actors in these scenes above themselves, and excited them to deeds of self-denial, which the interested prudence of calmer seasons can scarcely credit.

## CHAP. V.

Transactions in Great-Britain, in consequence of the proceedings of Congress, in 1774.

COME time before the proceedings of Congress reach O ed England, it was justly apprehended that a nonimportation agreement would be one of the measure they would adopt. The ministry apprehending that this event, by diffreffing the trading and manufacturing towns, might influence votes against the court, in the election of a new parliament, which was of course to come on in the fucceeding year, fuddenly diffolved the parliament, and immediately ordered a new one to be chosen. It was their design to have the whole business of elections over, before the inconveniencies of a non-importation agreement could be felt. The nation was thus furprifed into at election without knowing that the late American acts had driven the colonies into a firm combination to support, and make a common cause, with the people of Massachusetts A new parliament was returned, which met in thirty-four days after the proceedings of Congress were first published in Philadelphia, and before they were known in Great-Britain. This, for the most part consisted, either of the former members, or of those who held similar sentiments

On the 30th of November, the king in his speech to his new parliament informed them, "that a most daring spirit of resistance and disobedience to the laws, unhap pily prevailed in the province of Massachusetts, and had broke forth in fresh violences of a very criminal nature, and that these proceedings had been countenanced and encouraged in his other colonies, and unwarrantable attempts had been made to obstruct the commerce of his kingdoms by unlawful combinations, and that he had taken such measures, and given such orders as he judged most

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proper and effectual, for carrying into execution the laws which were passed in the last session of the late parlia-

ment, relative to the province of Massachusetts."

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An address which was proposed in the house of commons in answer to this speech, produced a warm debate. The minister was reminded of the great effects he had predicted from the late American acts. " They were to humble that whole continent, without further trouble, and the punishment of Boston, was to strike so universal a panic on all the colonies, that it would be totally aban-1. doned, and instead of obtaining relief, a dread of the same fate would awe the other provinces to a most respectful submission." An address re-echoing the royal speech, was nevertheless carried by a great majority. fimilar address was carried, after a spirited debate, in the upper house, but the lords Richmond, Portland, Rockingham, Stamford, Stanhope, Torrington, Ponfonby, Wycombe and Camden, entered a protest against it, which concluded with thefe remarkable words. "Whatever may be the mischievous defigns, or the inconsiderate temerity which leads others to this desperate course, we wish to be known as persons who have disapproved of meafures fo injurious in their past effects, and future tendency, and who are not in hafte, without inquiry or information, to commit ourselves in declarations, which may precipitate our country into all the calamities of a civil war."

Soon after the meeting of the new parliament, the proceedings of the Congress reached Great-Britain. The first impression made by them was in favour of America. Administration seemed to be staggered, and their oppofers triumphed, in the eventual truth of their prediction, that an universal confederacy to refift Great-Britain, would be the consequence of the late American acts. The fecretary of state, after a day's perusal, during which a council was held, faid that the petition of Congress to the King, was a decent and proper one. also cheerfully undertook to present it, and afterwards reported, that his Majesty was pleased very graciously to receive it, and to promife to lay it before his two houses of parliament. From these favourable circumstances, the fanguine friends of America, copcluded that it was intended to make the petition, the foundation of a change of measures, but these hopes were of short duration.

The warmer partifans of administration, placed so much considence in the efficacy of the measures, they

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had lately taken to bring the Americans to obedience that they regarded the boldest resolutions of Congress, a the idle clamors of an unruly multitude, which proper exertions on the part of Great-Britain would speedily filence. So much had been afferted and contradicted by both parties, that the bulk of the people could form no certain opinion on the subject.

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The parliament adjourned for the Christmas holidays, without coming to any decision on American affairs. As foon as they met in January, a number of papers, con. taining information, were laid before them. These were mostly letters from governors, and other servants of his Majesty, which detailed the opposition of the colonists, in language calculated to give a bad impression of their past conduct, and an alarming one of their future intentions.

It was a circumstance unfavourable/to the lovers of peace, that the rulers of Great-Britain received almost the whole of their American intelligence from those, who had an interest in deceiving them. Governors, judges, revenue-officers, and other royal fervants, being both appointed and paid by Great-Britain, fancied that zeal for the interest of that country, would be the most likely way to ensure their farther promotion. They were therefore, in their official dispatches, to government, often tempted to abuse the colonists, with a view of magnifying their own watchfulness and recommending themselves to Great-Britain. The plain, fimple language of truth, was not acceptable to courtly ears. Ministers received and careffed those, and those only, whose representations coincided with their own views and wishes. They who contended that by the spirit of the English constitution British subjects, residing on one side of the Atlantic, were entitled to equal privileges with those who resided on the other, were unnoticed, while the abettors of ministerial measures were heard with attention.

In this hour of national infatuation Lord Chatham, af-Jan. 20. ter a long retirement, refumed his feat in the House of Lords, and exerted his unrivalled eloquence, in fundry attempts to diffuade his countrymen from attempting to fubdue the Americans by force of arms. The native dignity of his fuperior genius, and the recollection of his important fervices, entitled him to diftinguished notice. His language, voice, and gesture, were calculated to force comviction on his hearers. Though venerable for his age,

he spoke with the fire of youth. He introduced himself 1775. with some general observations on the importance of the American quarrel. He enlarged on the dangerous events that were coming on the nation, in confequence of the present dispute. He arraigned the conduct of ministers with great feverity, and reprobated their whole system of American politics, and moved that an humble address, be presented to his Majesty, most humbly to advise and befeech him to dispatch orders to General Gage, to remove his Majesty's forces from the town of Boston. His lordship supported this motion in a pathetic animated speech, but it was rejected by a great majority. From this and other circumstances it soon became evident, that the Americans could expect no more favour from the new parliament, than they had experienced from the late one. A majority in both houses was against them, and resolved to compel them to obediences; but a respectable minority in their favour was strongly seconded by petitions from the merchants and manufacturers throughout the kingdom, and particularly by those of London and Bristol, As these were well apprifed of the consequences that must follow from a profecution of coercive measures, and deeply interested in the event, they made uncommon exertions to prevent their adoption, They circumstantially pointed out the various evils that would refult from them, and faithfully warned their countrymen of the danger, to which their commercial interests were exposed.

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When the petition from the merchants of London was read in the House of Commons, it was moved to refer it to the committee appointed to take into consideration the American papers; but it was moved by way of amendment on the ministerial side, that it should be referred to a separate committee, to meet on the 27th, the day succeeding that appointed for the consideration of American papers. This, though a dishonourable evasion, was carried

by a majority of more than two to one.

A similar fate attended the petitions from Bristol, Glasgow, Norwich, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Woolverhampton, Dudley, and some other places. These on their being presented, were in like manner configned to what the opposition humourously termed the committee of oblivion.

About the same time a petition was offered from Mr. Bollan, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Lee, stating that they were authorized

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authorized by Congress to present their petition to the king, which his Majesty had referred to that house, and that they were enabled to throw great light on the subject, and praying to be heard at the bar, in support of the said petition. The friends of the ministry alledged, that as Congress was not a legal body, nothing could be received from them. It was in vain replied, that the Congress, however illegal as to other purposes, was sufficiently legal for presenting a petition, and that as it was signed by the individual members of Congress, it might be received as a petition from individuals.—That the signers of it were persons of great influence in America, and it was the right of all subjects to have their petitions heard.

In the course of the debate on Lord Chatham's motion for addressing his Majesty to withdraw his troops from Boston, it had been observed by some lords in administration, that it was common and costs to confirm their more

tion, that it was common and easy to censure their meafures, but those who did so proposed nothing better. Lord Chatham answered, that he should not be one of

those idle censurers, that he had thought long and closely upon the subject, and proposed soon to lay before their Lordships the result of his meditations, in a plan for heal-

ing the differences between Great-Britain and the colonies, and for restoring peace to the empire. When he had matured his plan, he introduced it into the house, in the

form of a bill for fettling the troubles in America. In this he proposed that the colonists should make a full acknowledgment of the supremacy of the legislature, and

the superintending power of the British parliament. The bill did not absolutely decide on the right of taxation, but

partly as a matter of grace, and partly as a compromise, declared and enacted, "that no tollage tax, or other

charge, should be levied in America, except by common consent in their provincial assemblies." It afferted the

right of the King to fend a legal army to any part of his dominions at all times, but declared, "that no military

force could ever be lawfully employed to violate or destroy the just rights of the people." It also legalised the hold-

ing a Congress in the ensuing May for the double purpose " of recognising the supreme legislative authority,

and superintending power of parliament over the colonies, and for making a free grant to the King, his heirs and

fuccessors, of a certain and perpetual revenue, subject to the disposition of parliament, and applicable to the alleviation

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of the national debt." On these conditions the bill proposed, " to restrain the powers of the admiralty courts to their ancient limits, and fuspended for a limited time, those acts which had been complained of by Congress." It proposed to place the judges in America on the same footing as to the holding of their falaries and offices, with those in England, and secured to the colonies all the privileges, franchifes, and immunities, granted by their feveral charters and constitutions. His Lordship introduced this plan with a speech, in which he explained and supported every part of it. When he fat down, Lord Dartmouth rose and said, " it contained matter of such magnitude as to require confideration, and therefore hoped, that the noble Earl did not expect their Lordships to decide upon it by an immediate vote, but would be willing it should lie on the table for confideration." Lord Chatham anfwered "that he expected no more," but Lord Sandwich role, and in a petulant speech opposed its being received at all, and gave his opinion, "that it ought immediately to be rejected with the contempt it deferved.—That he could not believe it to be the production of any British peer-that it appeared to him rather the work of fome American," and turning his face towards Dr. Franklin, who was leaning on the bar, faid, " he fancied he had in his eye the person who drew it up, one of the bitterest and most mischievous enemies this country had ever known." This turned the eyes of many Lords on the insulted American, who, with that felf command, which is peculiar to great minds, kept his countenance unmoved. Several other Lords of the administration gave their fentiments also, for rejecting Lord Chatham's conciliatory bill, urging that it not only gave a fanction to the traitorous proceedings of the Congress already held, but legalifed their future meeting. They enlarged on the rebellious temper and hostile disposition of the Americans, and said, " that though the duty on tea was the pretence, the restrictions on their commerce, and the hopes of throwing them off, were the real motives of their disobedience, and that to concede now, would be to give up the point for ever."

The Dukes of Richmond and Manchester, Lord Camden, Lord Littleton and others, were for receiving Lord Chatham's conciliatory bill—some from approbation of its principles, but others only from a regard to the character and dignity of the house.

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Lord Dartmouth who, from indecision rarely had any will or judgment of his own, and who with dispositions for the best measures, could be easily prevailed upon to join in support of the worst, finding the opposition from his coadjutors in administration unexpectedly strong, turn. ed round and gave his voice with them for immediately rejecting the plan. Lord Chatham, in reply to Lord Sand. wich, declared, " the bill proposed by him to be entirely his own, but he made no scruple to declare, that if he were the first minister of the country, and had the care of fettling this momentous business, he should not be ashamed of publicly calling to his affistance a person so perfectly acquainted with the whole of the American affairs as the gentleman alluded to, and so injuriously reflected upon (Dr. Franklin). One whom all Europe held in high estimation for his knowledge and wisdom, and ranked with her Boyles and her Newtons-who was an honour, not only to the English nation, but to human nature."

The plan proposed by Lord Chatham was rejected, by a majority of 64 to 32, and without being admitted to lie on the table. That a bill on so important a subject, offered by one of the first men of the age, and who, as prime minister of the nation, had but a few years before taken up Great-Britain when in the lowest despondency, and conducted her to victory and glory, through a war with two of the most powerful kingdoms of Europe, should be rejected without any confideration, or even a second reading, was not only a breach of decency, but a departure from that propriety of conduct which should mark the proceedings of a branch of the national legislature. It could not but strike every thinking American, that such legislators, influenced by passion, prejudice, and party fpirit, many of whom were totally ignorant of the subject, and who would not give themselves an opportunity by fecond reading, or farther confideration, to inform themfelves better, were very unfit to exercise unlimited supremacy over three millions of virtuous, fensible people, inhabiting the other fide of the globe.

On the day after the rejection of Lord Chatham's bill, a petition was presented to the House of Commons, from the planters of the sugar colonies residing in Great-Britain, and the merchants of London trading to the colonies.—In this they stated, that the British property in

the West-India Islands amounted to upwards of 30 millions, and that a further property of many millions was employed in the commerce created by the faid islands, and that the profits and produce of these immense capitals which ultimately centered in Great-Britain, would be deranged and endangered by the continuance of the American troubles. The petitioners were on the 16th of the next month admitted to a hearing, when Mr. Glover, as their agent, ably demonstrated the folly and danger of persevering in the contest, but without any effect. immediate coercion of the colonies was refolved upon, and the ministry would not suffer themselves to be diverted from its execution. They were confident of success, if they could once bring the controversy to the decision of arms. They expected more from conquest than they could promife themselves by negociation or compromise.

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The free conflitutions of the colonies and their rapid progress in population, were beheld with a jealous eye, as the natural means of independence. They conceived the most effectual method of retaining them long, would be to reduce them foon. They hoped to be able to extinguish remonstrance and debate by such a speedy and decisive conquest, as would give them an opportunity to new model the colonial conftitutions, on fuch principles as would have prevented future altercations on the subject of their chartered rights. Every representation that tended to retard or obstruct the coercion of the colonies, was therefore confidered as tending only to prolong the controverly,—Confident of Victory, and believing that nothing thort of it would restore the peace of the empire, the miniftry turned a deaf ear to all petitions and representa-They even prefumed that the petitioners, when they found Great-Britain determined on war, would affift in carrying it on with vigour, in order to expedite the settlement of the dispute. They took it for granted, that when the petitioning towns were convinced that a renewal of the commercial intercourse between the two countries would be sooner obtained by going on, than turning back, that the same interest which led them at first to petition, would lead them afterwards to support coercive measures, as the most effectual and shortest way of lecuring commerce from all future interruptions.

The determination of ministers to persevere was also forwarded by hopes of the desection of New-York from her sister colonies.—They flattered themselves, that when

1775. one link of the continental chain gave way, it would be eafy to make an impression on the disjointed extremities.

Every attempt to close the breach which had been open. ed by the former parliament, having failed, and the miniftry having made up their minds on the mode of proceeding with the colonists, their proposed plan was briefly unfolded. This was to fend a greater force to America, and to bring in a temporary act to put a stop to all the foreign trade of the New England colonies, till they should inake proper submissions and acknowledgments. An addrefs to his Majefly was at the fame time moved for, to " beseech him to take the most effectual measures, to enforce due obedience to the laws and authority of the fupreme legislature."

Truly critical was that moment to the union of the empire. A new parliament might, without the charge of inconfistency, have repealed acts, passed by a former one, which had been found inconvenient on experiment; but pride and paffion, under the specious names of national dignity and zeal for the supremacy of parliament, induced the adoption of measures for immediately com-

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pelling the fubmission of the colonies.

The repeal of a few acts of parliament would at this time, have fatisfied America. Though she had been extending her claims, yet she was still willing that Great-Britain should monopolize her trade, and that the parliament should regulate it for the common benefit of the empire; nor was the disposed to abridge his majesty of any of his usually prerogatives. This authority was sufficient for the Mother Country to retain the colonists in a profitable state of subordination, and yet not so much as to be inconfistent with their claims, or the fecurity of their most important interests. Britain viewed the matter in a different light. To recede at this time, was to acknowledge, that the ministry had hitherto been in the wrong, a concession rarely made by private persons, but more rarely still by men in public stations. The leading members in parliament, not diffinguishing the opposition of freemen to unconstitutional innovations, from the turbulence of licentious mobs breaking over the bounds of law and constitution, supposed that to redress grievances, was to renounce fovereignty. This inference, in fome degree, refulted from the broad basis which they had affigned to the claims of the Mother Country. was contended, on the part of Great-Britain, they had a right to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever, and

the power of parliament over them was absolute and un- 1775. limited, they were precluded from rescinding any act of theirs, however oppressive, when demanded as a matter of right. They were too highly impressed with ideas of their unlimited authority to repeal any of their laws, on the principle, that they had not a conflitutional power to enact them, and too unwife to adopt the same measure on the ground of political expediency. Unfortunately for both countries, two opinions were generally believed, neither of which was perhaps true in its utmost extent, and one of which was most affuredly false. The ministry and parliament of England proceeded on the idea, that the claims of the colonists amounted to absolute independence, and that a fixed resolution to renounce the sovereignty of Great-Britain was concealed, under the specious pretext of a redress of grievances. The Americans on the other hand, were equally confident that the Mother Country not only harboured defigns unfriendly to their interests, but seriously intended to introduce arbitrary government. Jealoufies of each other were reciprocally indulged to the destruction of all confidence, and to the final dismemberment

of the empire.

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In discussing the measures proposed by the minister for the coercion of the colonies, the whole ground of the American controversy was traversed. The comparative merits of concession and coercion were placed in every point of view. Some of the minority in both houses of parliament, pointed out the dangers that would attend a war with America—the likelihood of the interference of other powers—the probability of loling, and the impoffibility of gaining any thing more than was already poffessed. On the other hand, the friends of the ministry afferted that the Americans had been long aiming at independence—that they were magnifying pretended grievances to cover a premeditated revolt—that it was the bufiness and duty of Englishmen, at every hazard to prevent its completion, and to bring them back to a remembrance that their present greatness was owing to the Mother Country; and that even their existence had been purchased at an immense expence of British blood and treasure. They acknowledged the danger to be great, but faid " it must be encountered; that every day's delay increased the evil, and that it would be base and cowardly to shift off for the present an unavoidable contest, which must fall with accumulated weight on the heads of their posterity 1775.

posterity." The danger of foreign interference was denied, and it was contended that an appearance of vigorous measures, with a farther reinforcement of troops at Boston, would be sufficient to quell the disturbances; and it was urged, that the friends of government were both strong and numerous, and only waited for proper support, and favourable circumstances, to declare themselves.

After long and warm debates, and one or two protests, the ministerial plans were carried by great majorities. In consequence thereof, on the 9th of February, 1775, a joint address from both lords and commons, was presented to his Majesty, in which "they returned thanks for the communication of the papers relative to the state of the British colonies in America, and gave it as their opinion, that a rebellion actually existed in the province of Massachusetts, and beseeched his Majesty that he would take the most effectual measures to enforce due obedience to the laws and authority of the supreme legislature, and begged in the most solemn manner to assure his Majesty that it was their fixed resolution, at the hazard of their lives and properties, to stand by his Majesty against all rebellious attempts, in the maintenance of the just rights of his Majesty, and the two houses of parliament.'

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The Lords Richmond, Craven, Archer, Abergaveny, Rockingham, Wycombe, Courtenay, Torrington, Ponfonby, Cholmondeley, Abingdon, Rutland, Camden, Effingham, Stanhope, Scarborough, Fitzwilliam and Tankerville, protested against this address, "as founded on no proper parliamentary information, being introduced by refusing to suffer the presentation of petitions against it (though it be the undoubted right of the subject to present the same)—as following the rejection of every mode of conciliation—as holding out no substantial offer of redress of grievances, and as promising support to those ministers who had inflamed America, and grossly misconducted the

affairs of Great-Britain,"

By the address, against which this protest was entered, the parliament of Great-Britain passed the Rubicon. In former periods, it might be alledged that the claims of the colonies were undefined, and that their unanimous resolution to defend them was unknown; but after a free representation from twelve provinces had stated their rights and pledged themselves to each other to support them, and their determinations were known, a resolution that a rebellion actually existed, and that at the hazard of their lives

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lives and properties, they would stand by his Majesty against all rebellious attempts, was a virtual declaration of war. Both parties were now bound in confequence of their own acts, to fubmit their controversy to the decifion of arms. Iffue was joined by the approbation Congress had given to the Suffolk resolves, and by this subsequent joint address of both houses of parliament to his Majesty. It is probable that neither party, in the beginning, intended to go thus far, but by the infcrutable operations of providence, each was permitted to adopt fuch measures as not only rent the empire, but involved them both, with their own consent, in all the calamities of a long and bloody war. The answer from the throne to the joint address of parliament, contained affurances of taking the most speedy and effectual measures for enforcing due obedience to the laws, and authority of the fupreme legislature. This answer was accompanied with a meffage to the commons, in which they were informed that fome augmentation to the forces by fea and land would be necessary. An augmentation of 4383 men to the land forces, and of 2000 seamen, to be employed for the enfuing year, was accordingly asked for, and carried without difficulty. By the first it was stated, that the force at Boston would be ten thousand men, a number supposed to be fufficient for enforcing the laws. Other schemes, in addition to a military force, were thought adviseable for promoting the projected coercion of the colonies. With this view a punishment was proposed, so universal in its operation, that it was expected the inhabitants of the New-England colonies, to obtain a riddance of its heavy Feb. 10. pressure, would interest themselves in procuring a general fubmiffion to parliament. Lord North moved for leave to bring in a bill to reftrain the trade and commerce of the provinces of Maffachusetts Bay, and New-Hampshire, the colonies of Connecticut and Rhode-Island, and Providence Plantations in North-America, to Great-Britain, Ireland, and the British islands in the West-Indies, and to prohibit fuch provinces and colonies from carrying on any fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, or other places therein to be mentioned, under certain conditions, and for a limited time. The motion for this bill was supported, by declaring that as the Americans had refused to trade with the Mother Country, they ought not to be permitted to trade with any other. was known that the New-England colonies carried on a

circuitous trade and fishing, on the banks of Newfound. land, to a great extent. To cut them off from this refource, they were legislatively forbidden to fish, or to carry on foreign trade. It was presumed that the wants of a large body of people deprived of employment, would create a clamour in favour of reconciliation.

The British ministry endeavoured to excite the same temper in the unemployed New-England men, that Con. gress meant to raise by the non-importation agreement, among the British merchants and manufacturers. The motion for this bill brought into view, the whole of the American controversy. The opposers of it said, that its cruelty exceeded the examples of hoftile rigour with avow. ed enemies; for that in the most dangerous wars, the fishing craft was univerfally spared—they defired the propofer of the bill to recollect, that he had often spoken of the multitude of friends he had in those provinces, and that now he confounded the innocent with the guilty-friends with enemies, and involved his own partizans in one common ruin with his oppofers. They alledged farther, that the bill would operate against the people of Great-Britain, as the people of New-England were in debt to them, and had no other means of paying that debt, but through the fithery, and the circuitous trade dependent on it. It was observed, that the fishermen being cut off from employment must turn foldiers, and that therefore while they were provoking the Americans to refistance by one fet of acts, they were furnishing them with the means of recruiting an army by another. The favourers of the bill denied the charge of severity, alledging that the colonists could not complain of any diffress the bill might bring on them, as they not only deferved it, but had fet the example, that they had entered into unlawful combinations to ruin the merchants and manufacturers of Great-Britain. It was faid, that if any foreign power had offered a fimilar infult or injury, the whole nation would have demanded fatisfaction. They contended that it was a bill of humanity and mercy; for, faid they, the colonists have incurred all the penalties of rebellion, and are liable to the feverest military execution. Instead of inflicting the extent of what they deferved, the bill only proposes to bring them to their senses, by restricting their trade. They urged farther that the measure was necelfary, for faid they, "the Americans have frequently imposed on us, by threatening to withdraw their trade, hoping

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hoping through mercantile influence to bend the legislature to their demands—that this was the third time they had thrown the commerce of Great-Britain into a state of confusion. That both colonies and commerce were better lost than preserved on such terms. They added farther, that they must either relinquish their connection with America, or six it on such a basis as would prevent a return of these evils. They admitted the bill to be coercive, but said, "That the coercion which put the speediest end to the dispute, was eventually the most merciful."

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In the progress of the bill, a petition from the merchants and traders of London, who were interested in the American commerce, was presented against it. They were heard by their agent, Mr. David Barclay, and a variety of witnesses were examined before the nouse. In the course of their evidence it appeared that in the year 1764, the four provinces of New-England employed in their feveral fisheries no less than 45,880 ton of shipping, and 6002 men; and that the produce of their fisheries that year, in foreign markets, amounted to 322,220l. 16s. sterling. It also appeared that the fisheries had very much increased fince that time-that all the materials used in them, except falt, and the timber of which the veffels were built, were purchased from Great-Britain; and that the net proceeds of the whole were remitted thither. All this information was difregarded. After much opposition in both houses, and a protest in the house of lords, the bill was, by a great majority, finally ratified. So intent was the ministry and parliament on the coercion of the colonifts, that every other interest was facrificed to its accomplishment. They conceived the question between the two countries to be fimply whether they should abandon their claims, and at once give up all the advantages arifing from fovereignty and commerce, or refort to violent measures for their security.

Since the year 1769, when a secretary of state officially disclaimed all views of an American revenue, little mention had been made of that subject, but the decided majority which voted with the ministry on this occasion, emboldened Lord North once more to present it to the view of his countrymen; he therefore brought into parliament a scheme which had the double recommendation of holding forth the semblance of conciliation, and the prospect of an easement of British taxes, by a productive

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1775. revenue from the colonies. This was a refolution which

paffed on the 20th of February.

"Refolved, That when the governor, council, and affembly, or general court, of any of his Majesty's provin. ces or colonies in America, shall propose to make provision according to the condition, circumstances, and fin. ations of fuch province or colony, for contributing their proportion for the common defence, (fuch proportion to be raised under the authority of the general court or ge. neral affembly of fuch province or colony, and disposable by parliament) and shall engage to make provision also for the support of the civil government, and the adminiftration of justice in such province or colony, it will be proper, if fuch proposal shall be approved of by his Majefty and the two houses of parliament, and for so long as fuch provision shall be made accordingly, to forbear, in respect of such province or colony, to levy any duty, tax, or affeffment, except only fuch duties as it may be expedient to continue to levy or to impose for the regulation of commerce, the net produce of the duties last mentioned, to be carried to the account of fuch province or colony respectively."

This was introduced by the minister in a long speech, in which he afferted that it would be an infallible touch stone to try the Americans; " If" faid he, " their opposition is only founded on the principles which they pretend, they must agree with this proposition, but if they have deligns in contemplation different from those they avow, their refusal will convict them of duplicity. The oppositions to the minister's motion or ginated among those who had supported him in previous questions. They objected to the proposal that in effect it was an acknowledgment of fomething grievous in the idea of taxing America by parliament, and that it was therefore a departure from their own principles. They contended that it was improper to make concessions to rebels with arms in their hands, or to enter into any measures for a settlement with the Americans, in which they did not, as a preliminary, acknowledge the fupremacy of parliament. The minister was likely to be deferted by fome of his partizans, till others explained the confiftency of the scheme with their former declarations.

It was asked, " what shall parliament lose by acceding to this refolution? Not the right of taxing America, for this is most expressly reserved. Not the profitable exercife of this right, for it proposed to enforce the only esfential part of taxation, by compelling the Americans to raife not only what they, but what we, think reasonable. We are not going to war for trifles and a vain point of honour, but for substantial revenue." The minister farther declared, that he did not expect his proposition to be generally relished by the Americans. But fays he, if it does no good in the colonies, it will do good here, it will unite the people of England, by holding out to them a distinct object of revenue. He added further, as it tends to unite England, it is likely to difunite America, for if only one province accepts the offer, their confederacy, which only makes them formidable, will be broken.

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The oppofers of ministry attacked the proposition with the combined force of wit and argument. They animadverted on the inconfistency of holding forth the fame refolution as a measure of concession, and as an affertion of authority. They remarked that hitherto it had been constantly denied that they had any contest about an American revenue—that the whole had been a dispute about obedience to trade-laws, and the general legislative authority of parliament, but now ministers suddenly changed their language, and proposed to interest the nation-confole the manufacturers and animate the foldiery, by perfuading them that it is not a contest for empty honour, but for the acquisition of a substantial revenue. was faid that the Americans would be as effectually taxed, without their confent, by being compelled to pay a gross fum, as by an aggregate of fmall duties to the fame amount. That this scheme of taxation exceeded in oppression any that the rapacity of mankind had hitherto de-In other cases a specific sum was demanded, and the people might reasonably presume that the remainder was their own; but here they were wholly in the dark as to the extent of the demand.

This proposition, however for conciliation, though ill relished by many of the friends of ministry, was carried on a division of 274 to 88. On its transmission to the colonies, it did not produce the effects of disunion expected from it. It was unanimously rejected. The reason for this cannot be expressed better than in the act of Con-

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gress on that subject, which after a recital of the said conciliatory motion, proceeded in the following words, "The Congress took the said resolution into consideration, and

are thereupon of opinion,

"That the colonies of America are entitled to the fole and exclusive privilege of giving and granting their own money. That this involves a right of deliberating whether they will make any gift, for what purposes it shall be made, and what shall be its amount; and that it is a high breach of this privilege for any body of men, extraneous to their constitutions, to prescribe the purposes for which money shall be levied on them, to take to themselves the authority of judging of their conditions, circumstances, and situations, and of determining the amount of the contribution to be levied.

"That as the colonies posses a right of appropriating their gifts, so are they entitled at all times to enquire into their application, to see that they be not wasted among the venal and corrupt for the purpose of undermining the civil rights of the givers, nor yet be diverted to the support of standing armies, inconsistent with their freedom and subversive of their quiet. To propose therefore, as this resolution does, that the monies given by the colonies shall be subject to the disposal of parliament alone, is to propose that they shall relinquish this right of enquiry, and put it in the power of others to render their gifts ruinous, in proportion as they are liberal.

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"That this privilege of giving, or of withholding our monies, is an important barrier against the undue exertion of prerogative, which, if left altogether without controul, may be exercised to our great oppression; and all history shews how efficacious is its intercession for redress of grievances, and re-establishment of rights, and how improvident it would be to part with so powerful a

mediator.

"We are of opinion that the proposition contained in this resolution is unreasonable and insidious: Unreasonable because if we declare we accede to it we declare without reservation, we will purchase the favour of parliament, not knowing at the same time at what price they will please to estimate their favour; it is insidious, because individual colonies, having bid and bidden again, till they find the avidity of the seller too great for all their powers to satisfy are then to return into opposition, divided from their sister colonies

colonies whom the minister will have previously detached by a grant of easier terms, or by an artful procrastination of a definitive answer.

of a definitive answer.

"That the suspension of the exercise of their pretended power of taxation being expressly made commensurate with the continuance of our gifts, these must be perpetual to make that so. Whereas no experience has shewn that a gift of perpetual revenue secures a perpetual return of

duty or of kind disposition. On the contrary, the parliament itself, wisely attentive to this observation, are in the established practice of granting their supplies from year

to year only.

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Desirous, and determined as we are to consider, in the most dispassionate view, every seeming advance towards a reconciliation made by the British parliament, let our brethren of Britain reslect what would have been the sacrifice to men of free spirits had even fair terms been prossered, as these insidious proposals were, with circumstances of insult and desiance. A proposition to give our money, accompanied with large sleets and armies, seems addressed to our fears rather than to our freedom. With what patience would Britons have received articles of treaty from any power on earth when borne on the point of a bayonet by military plenipotentiaries?

"We think the attempt unnecessary to raise upon us by force or by threats our proportional contributions to the common defence, when all know, and themselves acknowledge, we have fully contributed, whenever called upon

to do fo in the character of freemen.

"We are of opinion it is not just that the colonies should be required to oblige themselves to other contributions, while Great-Britain possesses a monopoly of their trade. This of itself lays them under heavy contribution. To demand, therefore, additional aids in the form of a tax, is to demand the double of their equal proportion, if we are to contribute equally with the other parts of the empire, let us equally with them, enjoy free commerce with the whole world. But while the restrictions on our trade shut to us the resources of wealth, is it just we should bear all other burthens, equally with those to whom every resource is open?

"We conceive that the British parliament has no right to intermeddle with our provisions for the support of civil government, or administration of justice. The provisi-

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ons we have made are such as please ourselves, and are agreeable to our own circumstances: They answer the substantial purposes of government and of justice, and other purposes than these should not be answered. We do not mean that our people shall be burthened with oppressive taxes, to provide sinecures for the idle or the wicked, under colour of providing for a civil list. While parliament pursue their plan of civil government within their own jurisdiction, we also hope to pursue ours without molestation.

"We are of opinion the proposition is altogether unfatisfactory; because it imports only a suspension of the mode, not a renunciation of the pretended right to tax us: Because too it does not propose to repeal the several acts of parliament, passed for the purposes of restraining the trade, and altering the form of government of one of our colonies; extending the boundaries and changing the government of Quebec; enlarging the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty and vice-admiralty; taking from us the rights of a trial by jury of the vicinage, in cases affecting both life and property; transporting us into other countries to be tried for criminal offences; exempting by mock-trial the murderers of colonists from punishment; and quartering foldiers on us in times of profound peace. Nor do they renounce the power of suspending our own legislatures, and legislating for us themselves, in all cases whatsoever. On the contrary, to shew they mean no discontinuance of injury, they pass acts, at the very time of holding out this proposition, for restraining the commerce and fisheries of the provinces of New-England, and for interdicting the trade of other colonies with all foreign nations, and with each other. This proves unequivocally that they mean not to relinquish the exercise of indifcriminate legislation over us.

Upon the whole, this proposition seems to have been held up to the world, to deceive it into a belief that there was nothing in dispute between us but the mode of levying taxes; and that the parliament having now been so good as to give up this, the colonies are unreasonable is not perfectly satisfied: whereas in truth our adversaries still claim a right of demanding ad libitum, and of taxing us themselves to the sull amount of their demand, if we do comply with it. This leaves us without any thing we can call property. But, what is of more importance, and what in this proposal they keep out of sight, as if no such

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point was now in contest between us, they claim a right to alter our charters and establish laws, and leave us without any fecurity for our lives or liberties. The proposition feems also to have been calculated more particularly to lull into fatal fecurity, our well affected fellow subjects on the other fide the water, till time should be given for the operation of those arms, which a British minister pronounced would inftantaneously reduce the "cowardly" fons of America to unreferved submission. But when the world reflects, how inadequate to justice are these vaunted terms; when it attends to the rapid and bold fuccession of injuries, which, during a course of eleven years, have been aimed at these colonies; when it reviews the pacific and respectful expostulations, which, during that whole time, were the fole arms we opposed to them; when it observes that our complaints were either not heard at all, or were answered with new and accumulated injuries; when it recollects that the minister himself on an early occasion declared, " that he would never treat with America, till he had brought her to his feet," and that an avowed partilan of ministry has more lately denounced against us the dreadful fentence " delendo eft Carthago," that this was done in presence of a British senate, and being unreproved by them, must be taken to be their own fentiment, (especially as the purpose has already in part been carried into execution, by their treatment of Boston and burning of Charlestown;) when it confiders the great armaments with which they have invaded us, and the circumstances of cruelty with which these have commenced and profecuted hostilities; when these things, we fay, are laid together and attentively confidered, can the world be deceived into an opinion that we are unreasonable, or can it hefitate to believe with us, that nothing but our own exertions may defeat the ministerial sentence of death or abject submission."

Other plans for conciliation with the colonies, founded on principles very different from those which were the basis of Lord North's conciliatory motion, were brought forward in the House of Commons, but without receiving its approbation. The most remarkable of these was proposed by Mr. Edmund Burke, in a speech, which for strength of argument, extent of information, and sublimity of language, would bear a comparison with the most smished performance that ancient or modern times have produced. In his introduction to this admirable speech,

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he examined and explained the natural and accidental cir. cumftances of the colonies, with respect to situation, refources, number, population, commerce, fisheries and agriculture, and from these confiderations shewed their importance. He then enquired into their unconquerable fpirit of freedom; and he traced it to its original fources. from these circumstances he inferred the line of police which should be pursued with regard to America-he shewed that all proper plans of government must be adapted to the feelings, established habits, and received opinions of the people. On these principles he reprebated all plans of governing the colonies by force; and proposed as the ground work of his plan, that the colonifts should be admitted to an interest in the constitution, He then went into an historical detail of the manner in which British privileges had been extended to Ireland, Wales, and the counties palatine of Chefter and Durham -the state of confusion previously to that event-and the happy confequences which followed it. He contended that a communication to the members of an interest in the constitution, was the great ruling principle of British government. He therefore proposed to go back to the old policy for governing the colonies. He was for a parliamentary acknowledgment of the legal competency of the colony affemblies for the support of their government in peace, and for public aids in time of war-and of the futility of parliamentary taxation as a method of supply. He flated that much had been given in the old way of colonial grant, that from the year 1748 to 1763, the journals of the House of Commons repeatedly acknowledged that the colonies not only gave, but gave to fatiety; and that from the time in which parliamentary impoltion had superseded the free gifts of the provinces, there was much discontent, but little revenue. He therefore moved fix refolutions affirmatory of these facts, and grounded on them resolutions for repealing the acts complained of by the Americans, trusting to the liberality of their future voluntary contributions. This plan of conciliation, which promised immediate peace to the whole empire, and a lafting obedience of the colonies, though recommended by the charms of the most persuasive elaquence, and supported by the most convincing arguments was by a great majority rejected.

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Mr. D. Hartley, not discouraged by the negative which had been given to Mr. Burke's scheme, came forward

with another for the same purpose. This proposed that a letter of requisition should be fent to the colonies by a fecretary of state, on a motion from the house for a contribution to the expences of the whole empire. He meant to leave to the provincial affemblies the right to judge of the expedience of the grant-its amount and application, In confidence that the colonies would give freely when called on in this constitutional way, he moved to suspend the acts complained of by the Americans. This was also rejected. Another plan which shall be more particularly explained was digested in private by Dr. Franklin, on the part of the Americans, and Dr. Fothergill, and David Barclay on behalf of the British ministry, There appeared a disposition to concede something considerable on both fides, but the whole came to nothing, in confequence of an inflexible determination to refuse a repeal of the act of parliament for altering the chartered government of Maffachusetts. Dr. Franklin agreed, that the tea destroyed should be paid for—the British ministers, that the Boston port act should be repealed, but the latter contended, that the late Maffachusetts acts being real amendments of their constitution, must for that reason be continued, as well as to be a standing example of the power of parliament." On the other hand it was declared by Dr. Franklin, " that while the parliament claimed and exertifed a power of internal legislation for the colonies, and of altering American constitutions at pleasure, there could be no agreement, as that would render the Americans unfafe in every privilege they enjoyed, and would leave them nothing in which they could be fecure."

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This obstinate adherence to support parliament in a power of altering the laws and charters of the provinces, particularly to enforce their late laws for new modelling the chartered constitution of Massachusetts, was the fatal rock by dashing on which the empire broke in twain; for every other point, in dispute between the two countries seemed in a fair way for an amicable compromise.

The fishery bill was speedily followed by another, for restraining the trade and commerce of the colonies and provinces of New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and south Carolina: The reasons assigned for this were the same with those offered for the other. These provinces had adopted the continental association. The British minister thought it proper, that as they had voluntarily interdicted themselves from trade with Great-

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1775. Britain, Ireland, and the West-Indies, they should be re. Itrained from it with all other parts of the world. He contended that the inhabitants of the colonies might render this act a dead letter, by relinquishing their own refolutions, as then they would meet with no restraint in carrying on trade in its ancient legal channel. It is remarkable, that three of the affociated colonies, viz. New. York, Delaware and North-Carolina, were omitted in this restraining bill. Whatever might be the view of the British ministry for this discrimination, it was considered in the colonies as calculated to promote difunion among them. It is certain, that the colonies which were exempted from its operation, might have reaped a golden harveft from the exemption in their favour, had they been difposed to avail themselves of it. But such was the temper of the times, that a renunciation of immediate advantage in favour of the public was fashionable. The selfish pasfions which in feafons of peace are too often the cause of quarrels, were hushed by the pressure of common danger. The exempted colonies spurned the proffered favour, and fubmitted to the restraints imposed on their less favoured neighbours fo as to be equal sharers of their fate. The indulgence granted to New-York, in being kept out of this restraining bill, was considered by some as a premium for her superior loyalty. Her assembly had refused to approve the proceedings of the Congress, and had, in some other instances, discovered less warmth than the neighbouring legislatures. Much was expected from her mo-At the very time the British parliament was framing the restraining acts just mentioned, the constitutional assembly of New-York petitioned the British; parliament for redrefs of their grievances. Great stress had been laid on the circumstance that Congress was not a legal affembly, and the want of constitutional fanction had been affigned as a reason for the neglect with which their petition had been treated. Much praise had been lavished on the colony of New-York for its moderation, and occasion had been taken, from their refusing to approve the proceedings of the Congress to represent the refolutions and claims of that body to be more the ebullitions of incendiaries, than the fober fentiments of the temperate citizen. It was both unexpected and confound ing to those who supported these opinions, that the representation and remonstrance of the very loyal affembly of New-York stated, " that an exemption from internal taxation, and the exclusive right of providing for their own civil government, and the administration of justice in the colony, were esteemed by them as their undoubted and unalienable rights."

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A motion being made in the House of Commons for bringing up this representation and remonstrance of the affembly of New-York, it was amended on the fuggestion of Lord North, by adding, " in which the affembly claim to themselves rights derogatory to, and inconsistent with the legislative authority of parliament, as declared by the declaratory act." The question, so amended, being put, it passed in the negative. The fate of this representation extinguished the hopes of those moderate perfons, both in the parent state and the colonies, who flattered themfelves that the disputes subfisting between the two countries might be accommodated by the mediation of the conflitutional affemblies. Two conclusions were drawn from this transaction, both of which were unfriendly to a reconciliation. The decided language with which the loyal affembly of New-York claimed exemption from parliamentary taxation, proved to the people of Great-Britain that the colonists, however they might differ in modes of opposition, or in degrees of warmth, were nevertheless, united in that fundamental principle. The rejection of their representation proved that nothing more was to be expected from proceeding in the constitutional channel of the legal affemblies, than from the new fystem of a continental Congress. Solid revenue and unlimited supremacy were the objects of Great-Britain, and exemption from parliamentary taxation that of the most moderate of the colonies. So wide were the claims of the two countries from each other, that to reconcile them on any middle ground feemed to be impossible.

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Some Special transactions of Dr. Franklin in London, in behalf of America.

WHILE the breach between Great-Britain and the colonies was daily encreasing, the enlightened and liberal, who loved peace, and the extention of human happiness, saw with regret the approaching horrors of a civil war, and wished to avert them. With these views. Dr. Fothergill, Mr. David Barclay and Dr. Franklin, held fundry conferences in London on American affairs. The two former were English gentlemen of most amiable characters, and highly efteemed by the British ministry. The last was by birth an American, but a citizen of the world, who loved and was beloved by all good men. He was also agent for several of the colonies. At one of their conferences held at the house of Dr. Fothergill on the 4th December, 1774, before the proceedings of Congress had reached England—a paper drawn up by the last, at the request of the two first, was submitted to their joint confideration, which with a few additions proposed and agreed to by common confent was as follows.

Hints for conversation upon the subjects of terms, that might probably produce a durable union between Britain

and the colonies.

1st. The tea destroyed to be paid for.

2d. The tea duty act to be repealed, and all the duties that have been received upon it to be repaid into the treasuries of the several provinces from which they have been collected.

3d. The acts of navigation to be all re-enacted in the

colonies.

4th. A naval officer to be appointed by the crown to fee that these acts are observed.

5th. All the acts reftraining manufactories in the colo-

nies to be reconfidered,

6th. All duties arifing on the acts for regulating trade with the colonies to be for the public use of the respective colonies and paid into their treasuries.

The collectors and custom house officers to be appoint-

ed by each governor and not fent from England.

7th. In confideration of the Americans maintaining their own peace establishment, and the monopoly Bri-

tain is to have of their commerce, no requisition is to be

8th. No troops to enter and quarter in any colony, but

with the confent of its legislature.

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oth. In time of war on requisition by the king with consent of parliament, every colony shall raise money by the following rules in proportion, viz. If Britain on account of the war, raises three shillings in the pound to its land tax, then the colonies to add to their last general provincial peace tax, a sum equal to one fourth part thereof, and if Britain on the same account pays four shillings in the pound, then the colonies to add to their last peace tax, a sum equal to the half thereof, which additional tax is to be granted to his majesty, and to be employed in raising and paying men for land or sea service, and surnishing provisions, transports, or for such other purposes as the king shall require and direct, and though no colony may contribute less, each may add as much by voluntary grant as it shall think proper.

Maffachusett's Bay, and no fortress to be built by the crown in any province, but with the consent of its legislature.

11th. The late Maffachusett's and Quebec acts to be re-

pealed, and a free government granted to Canada.

rath. All judges to be appointed during good behaviour, with equally permanent falaries to be paid out of the province revenues by appointment of the affemblies, or if the judges are to be appointed during the pleasure of the crown, let the falaries be during the pleasure of the affemblies as heretofore.

13th. Governors to be supported by the assemblies of

each province.

14th. If Britain will give up her monopoly of the American commerce, then the aid abovementioned to be given in time of peace as well as in time of war.

15th. The extension of the act of Henry the 8th, con-

parliament.

to. The American admiralty courts to be reduced to the same powers they have in England, and the acts establishing them to be re-enacted in America.

17th. All power of internal legislation in the colonies

to be disclaimed by parliament.

On reading this paper a fecond time, Dr. Franklin gave his reasons at length for each article. Some of his reasons were as follows:

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On the first article he observed, that when the tea was destroyed at Boston, Great-Britain had a right to reparation, and would certainly have had it on demand, as was the case when injuries were done by mobs in the time of the stamp act, or she might have a right to return an equal injury if the rather chose to do that; but Great-Britain could not have a right both to reparation and to return an equal injury, much less had she a right to return the injury ten or twenty fold, as the had done by blocking up the port of Boston. All which extra injury ought to be repaired by Great-Britain. That therefore if paying for the tea was agreed to, as an article fit to be proposed, it was merely from a defire of peace, and in com. pliance with the opinions of Dr. Fothergill and David Barclay expressed at their first meeting; -that this was indispensible, that the dignity of Great-Britain required it. and that it this was agreed to, every thing else would be eafy.

On the second, it was observed that the tea duty at should be repealed, as having never answered any good purpose, as having been the cause of the present mischief, and never likely to be executed. That the act being considered as unconstitutional by the Americans, and what parliament had no right to enact, they must consider all the money extorted by it as so much wrongfully taken, and of which therefore restitution ought to be made, and the rather as it would furnish a fund out of which the tea de-

stroyed would be best defrayed. On the third and fourth articles it was observed, that the Americans were frequently charged with views of abolishing the navigation act, but that in truth those parts of it which were of most importance to Britain, as tending to increase its naval strength, were as acceptable to the colonists as they could be to the inhabitants of the Parent State, fince they wished to employ their own ships in preference to those of foreigners, and they had no defire to see foreign ships enter their ports. That it would prevent disputes if they were re-enacted in the colonies, as that would demonstrate their consent to them, and then if all the duties arifing on them were to be collected by officers appointed and paid in the respective governments, and the produce paid into their treasuries, the acts would be better and more faithfully executed, and at much less expence, and a great fource of milunderitanding between the two countries removed—that the extension of the admiralty

admiralty jurisdiction so much complained of would then 1775.

no longer be necessary.

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In support of the 7th article it was observed, that if every distinct part of the king's dominions supported its own government in time of peace, it was all that could justly be required of it. That all the old or confederated colonies had done fo from their beginning, that their taxes for that purpose were very considerable, that new countries had many expences which old ones were free from, the work being done to their hand by their ancestors, fuch as making roads and bridges, erecting churches, court-houses, forts, quays and other public buildings, founding schools and places of education, hospitals and almshouses—that the voluntary subscriptions and legal taxes for fuch purposes taken together amounted to more than was paid by equal effates in Great-Britain, that it would be best not to take money from the Americans as a contribution to its public expence in time of peace, first for that just so much less would be got from them in commerce, and fecondly that coming into the hands of British ministers accustomed to prodigality of public money, it would be squandered and diffipated without answering any general good purposes. That on the whole it would be best for both countries, that no aids should be asked from the colonies in time of peace, that it would then be their interest to grant bountifully, and exert themselves, in time of war, the fooner to put an end to it.

In support of the 8th article, it was said, that if the king could bring into any one part of his dominions troops raised in any other part of them, without the consent of the legislature of the part to which they were brought, he might bring armies raised in America to England without the con-

fent of parliament.

The 9th article was drawn in compliance with an idea of Dr. Fothergill, that the British government would probably not be satisfied with the promise of voluntary grants in time of war from the American assemblies, of which the quantity must be uncertain, that therefore it would be best to proportion them in some way to the shilling in the pound raised in England.

In support of the 10th article, was urged the injustice of seizing that fortress which had been built at an immense charge by the province, for the desence of their port against national enemies, and turning it into a citadel for awing the town, restraining their trade, blocking up their port,

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and depriving them of their privileges. That a great deal had been faid of their injustice in destroying the tea, but here was a much greater injustice uncompensated, that

caffle having coft the province f. 300,000.

In support of the 11th article, it was faid, that as the Americans had affifted in the conquest of Canada, at a great expence of blood and treasure, they had some right to be confidered in the fettlement of it; that the establish. ing an arbitrary government on the bank of their fettlements would be dangerous to them all. That as to amending the Massachusetts government, though it might be fhewn that every one of these pretended amendments were real mischiefs, yet, that as charters were compacts between two parties, the king and the people, no alteration could be made in them even for the better, but by the confeat of both parties; that the parliamentary claim and exercise of power to alter American charters, had rendered all their conflitutions uncertain and fet them quite affoat. That by this claim of altering laws and charters at will, they deprived the colonists of all rights and privileges whatever, but what they should hold at their pleasure. - That this was a fituation they could not be in and must risque life and every

thing rather than fubmit to it.

The 12th article was explained by stating the former fituation of the judges in most of the colonies, viz. that they were appointed by the crown and paid by the affemblies, that the appointment being during the pleasure of the crown, the falary had been during the pleafure of the affembly;—that when it was urged against the affemblies that their making judges dependent on them for their falaries, was aiming at an undue influence over the courts of justice, the affemblies usually replied, that making them dependent on the crown for continuance in their places was also retaining an undue influence over those courts, and that one undue influence was a proper balance for another; but that whenever the crown would confent to the appointment of judges only during good behaviour, the affemblies would at the same time grant their salaries to be permanent during their continuance in office; that instead of agreeing to this equitable offer the crown now claimed to make the judges in the colonies dependent on its favour for place, as well as falary, and both to be continued at its pleasure. This the colonies must oppose as inequitable, as putting both the weights into one of the scales of justice."

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In favour of the 13th it was urged that the governors 1775. lent to the colonies were often men of no estate or principle, who came merely to make fortunes, and had no natural regard for the country they were to govern. That to make them quite independent of the people, was to make them careless of their conduct, and giving a loose to their rapacious and oppressive dispositions. That the dependence of the governors on the people, for their falaries could never operate to the prejudice of the king's fervice, or to the disadvantage of Britain, since each governor was bound by a particular fet of instructions which he had given furety to observe, and all the laws he affented to were subject to be repealed by the crown. That the payment of the falaries by the people was more fatisfactory to them, and was productive of a good understanding between governors and governed, and that therefore the innovations lately made at Boston and New-York, should be laid afide.

The 14th article was expunged on the representation of Dr. Fothergill and David Barclay, that the monopoly of the American commerce would never be given up, and that the proposing of it would only give offence, without answering any good purpose.

The 15th article was readily agreed to.

The 16th was thought to be of little consequence, if the

duties were given to the colony treasuries.

The 17th it was thought could hardly be obtained, but it was supported by Dr. Franklin, alleging that without it, any compact made with the Americans, might be evaded by acts of the British parliament, restraining the intermediate proceedings, which were necessary for carrying it into effect.

This paper of hints was communicated to Lord Dartmouth of Dr. Fothergill, who also stated the arguments which in conversation had been offered in support of them. When objections were made to them, as being humiliating to Great-Britain Dr. Fothergill replied "that she had been unjust, and ought to bear the consequences, and alter her conduct—that the pill might be bitter, but it would be salutary and must be swallowed; that sooner or later these or similar measures must be followed, or the empire would be divided and ruined."

These hints were handed about amongst ministers, and conferences were held on them. The result was on the 4th of February 1775 communicated to Dr. Franklin, in the presence of Dr. Fothergill and David Barclay, which as far as concerned the leading articles, was as follows:

1. The

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1. The first article was approved.

2. The second agreed to so far as related to the tea at, but repayment of the duties that had been collected, was refused.

2. The third not approved, as it implied a deficiency of power in the parliament that made the acts.

4. The fourth approved.

5. The fifth agreed to, but with a referve that no change

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prejudicial to Britain was to be expected.

6. The fixth agreed to, so far as related to the appropriation of the duties, but the appointment of the officers and of their falaries to remain as at present.

7. The seventh relating to aids in time of war, agreed to, 8. The eighth relating to troops, was inadmissible.

o. The ninth could be agreed to with this difference, that no proportion should be observed with regard to preceding taxes, but each colony should give at pleasure.

10. The tenth agreed to as to the restitution of Cassle William, but the restriction on the crown in building fort-

reffes refused.

- Boston port bill which would be repealed and the Quebec act might be so far amended, as to reduce that province to its ancient limits. The other MASSACHUSETTS ACTS BEING REAL AMENDMENTS OF THEIR CONSTITUTION, MUST FOR THAT REASON BE CONTINUED, AS WELL AS TO BE A STANDING EXAMPLE OF THE POWER OF PARLIAMENT.
- 12. The twelfth agreed to, that the judges should be appointed during good behaviour, on the assemblies providing permanent salaries, such as the crown should approve of.

13. The thirteenth agreed to, provided the affemblies

make provision, as in the preceding article.

15. The fifteenth agreed to.

16. The fixteenth agreed to, supposing the duties paid to the colony treasuries.

17. The seventeenth inadmissible.

At this interview the conversation was shortened by Dr. Franklin's observing, that while the parliament claimed and exercised a power of internal legislation for the colonies, and of altering American constitutions, at pleasure, there could be no agreement, as that would render the Americans unsafe in every privilege they enjoyed.

and would leave them nothing, in which they could be fecure. It being hinted how necessary an agreement was for America, since it was so easy for Britain to burn all her seaport towns. Dr Franklin replied, "that the chief part of his little property consisted of houses in such towns, that they might make bonsires of them whenever they pleased. That the sear of losing them would never alter his resolution of resisting to the last extremity, that claim of parliament, and that it behoved Great-Britain to take care what mischief she did to America, for that sooner or later she would certainly be obliged to make good all damages with interest."

On the 16th of February, 1775. The three beforementioned gentlemen met, when a paper was produced by David Barclay entitled, " A plan which it is believed would produce a permanent union between Great-Britain and her colonies. This, in the first article, proposed a repeal of the tea act, on payment being made for the tea destroyed. Dr. Franklin agreed to the first part, but contended that all the other Massachusetts acts should also be repealed, but this was deemed inadmiffable. Dr. Franklin declared that the people of Mallachusetts would suffer all the hazards and mischiefs of war, rather than admit the alteartion of their charters and laws, by parliament. He was for fecuring the unity of the empire, by recognifing the fanctity of charters, and by leaving the provinces to govern themselves, in their internal concerns, but the British ministry could not brook the idea of relinquishing their claim to internal legislation for the colonies, and especially to alter and amend their charters. The first was for communicating the vital principles of liberty to the provinces, but the latter though disposed to redress a few of their existing grievances, would by no means consent to a repeal of the late act of parliament, for altering the chartered government of Maffachusetts, and least of all to renounce all claim to future amendments of charters, or of internal legislation for the colonies.

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Dr. Franklin laboured hard to prevent the breach from becoming irreparable, and candidly stated the outlines of a compact which he supposed would procure a durable union of the two countries, but his well meant endeavours proved abortive, and in the mean time he was abused as the somenter of those disturbances which he was anxiously endeavouring to prevent. That the ministry might have some opening to proceed upon, and some Vol. I.

falvo for their perfonal honour, he was disposed to engage that pecuniary compensation should be made for the teadestroyed, but he would not give up effential liberty, for the purpole of procuring temporary fafety. Finding the minif. try bent on war, unless the colonists would confent to hold their rights, liberties and charters at the discretion of a British parliament, and well knowing that his countrymen would hazard every thing, rather than confent to terms fo degrading as well as inconfiftent with the spirit of the British conflitution, he quitted Great-Britain in March 1775, and returned to Philadelphia. Dr. Fothergill, his worthy coadjutor in the great buliness of peace, wrote to him on the evening before he left London. "That whatever specious pretences were offered, they were all hollow, and that to get a larger field on which to fatten a herd of worthless parafites was all that was intended." With this conviction founded on personal observations, as well as the testimony of his esteemed friend, who in the course of his daily visit among the great, in the practice of his profession, had an opportunity of knowing their undifguifed fentiments, Dr. Franklin joined his countrymen, and exerted his great abilities in conducting them through a war he had in vain laboured to prevent.

## C H A P. VI.

Consequences in America, resulting from the preceding transactions of Parliament; and of the commencement of Hetilities.

THE year 1774 terminated in America, with an expectation that a few months would bring them redress of their grievances; but the probability of the event daily diminished. The colonists had indulged themselves in an expectation that the people of Great-British from a consideration of the dangers and difficulties of a war with their colonies, would in their election have preferred those who were friends to peace and reconciliation; but when they were convinced of the salary of these hopes, they turned their attention to the means of self-defence. It had been the resolution of many never to submit to the operation of the late acts of parliament. Their number daily increased, and in the same proportion

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proportion that Great-Britain determined to enforce, did 1775. they determine to oppose. Intelligence of the rejection of Lord Chatham's bill, of the address of both houses of parliament to the King on the 9th of February, and of the fishery bill, all arrived among the colonists, about the fame time, and diminished what remained of their first hopes of a speedy accommodation. The fishery bill excited a variety of emotions. The obvious tendency of it was to starve thousands. The severity of it did not firike an Englishman, for he viewed it as a merited correction for great provincial offences; but it appeared in the blackest colours to an American, who felt no consciousness of guilt, and who fancied that Heaven approved his zeal in defence of liberty. It alienated the affections of the colonifts, and produced in the breafts of thousands, a hatred of Great-Britain.

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The penal acts of parliament in 1774, were all levelled against Massachusetts, but the fishery bill extended to New-Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode-Island. reasons assigned for this by Lord North were, that they had aided and abetted their offending neighbours, and were so near to them that the intentions of parliament would be frustrated, unless they were in like manner comprehended in the proposed restraints. The extension of this penal flatute to three additional provinces, operated powerfully in favour of union, and convinced the most moderate, of the increasing necessity for all the provinces to make a common cause of their opposition. Whatever might be the designs of parliament, their acts had a natural tendency to enlarge the demands of the Americans, and to cement their confederacy, by firm principles of union. At first they only claimed exemptions from internal taxation, but by the combination of the East-India company and the British ministry, an external tax was made to answer all the purposes of a direct internal tax. They therefore in confiftence with their own principles, were constrained to deny the right of taxing in any form for a fupply. Nothing could more contribute to make the colonists deny the parliamentary claim of internal legislation, than the manner in which it was exercised, in depriving them of their charters, and passing an act relative to trials, which promised indemmity to murderers. This convinced them that an opposition to fo injurious a claim was effentially necessary to their security. But they fill admitted the power of parliament M 2

to bind their trade. This was conceded by Congress but a few months before an act passed that they should have no foreign trade, nor be allowed to fish on their own The British ministry by their successive acts, impelled the colonists to believe, that while the Mother Country retained any authority over them, that authority would in some shape or other, be exerted so as to answer all the purposes of a power to tax. While Great-Britain firetched that portion of controling supremacy which the colonists were disposed to allow her, to such an extent as covered oppression equally grievous with that which they would not allow, the way was fast opening for a total renunciation of her fovereignty. The coercive measures adopted by the parent state, produced a disposition in the colonies to extend their claims, and the extension of their claims produced an increasing disposition in Great-Britain to coerce them still more. The jealoufy of liberty on one fide, and the defire of supremacy on the other, were reciprocally cause and effect; and urged both parties, the one to rife in their demands, and the other to enforce submission. In the contest between Great-Britain and her colonies, there had been a fatal progression from small to greater grounds of diffention. The trifling tax of 3d. per pound on tea, roused the jealous inhabitants of Boston to throw 340 chefts of it into the ocean. This provoked the British parliament to shut up their port, and to new model their charter. Statutes so unconstitutional and alarming, excited a combination in twelve of the colonies, to stop all trade with Great-Britain, Ireland and the West-Indies. Their combination gave birth to the restraining acts of parliament, by which nine of the colonies were interdicted all other trade but that from which they had voluntarily excluded themselves; and four of these nine were farther devoted to famine, by being forbidden to fish on their coasts. Each new resolution on the one fide, and new act on the other, reciprocally gave birth to fomething from the opposite party, that was more irritating or oppressive than what had preceded.

The beginning of strife between the parent state and her colonies, was like the letting out of waters. From inconsiderable causes love was changed into suspicion that gradually ripened into ill will, and soon ended in hostility. Prudence, policy, and reciprocal interest, urged the expediency of concession; but pride, salse honour, and misconceived dignity, drew in an opposite direction. Unde-

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cided claims and doubtful rights, which under the influence of wisdom and humility might have been easily compromised, imperceptibly widened into an irreconcilable breach. Hatred at length took the place of kind affections, and the calamities of war were substituted, in lieu of the benefits of commerce.

From the year 1768, in which a military force had been flationed in Boston, there was a constant succession of infulting words, looks and gestures. The inhabitants were exasperated against the soldiers, and they against the inhabitants. The former looked on the latter as the instruments of tyranny, and the latter on the former as feditious rioters, or fraudulent smugglers. In this irritable state every incident however trifling, made a fenfible impression, The citizens apprehended constant danger from an armed force, in whose power they were; the foldiers on the other hand, confidered themselves as in the midst of enemies, and exposed to attacks from within and from without, In proportion as the breach between Great-Britain and her colonies widened, the diftrust and animosity between the people and the army increased. From the latter end of 1774, hostile appearances daily threatened that the flames of war would be kindled from the collision of fuch inflammable materials. Whatfoever was done by either party by way of precaution, for the purposes of self defence, was construed by the other as preparatory to an intended attack. Each disclaimed all intentions of commencing hostilities, but reciprocally manifested suspicion of the others sincerity. As far as was practicable without an open rupture, the plans of the one were respectively thwarted by the other. From every appearance it became daily more evident that arms must ultimately decide the contest. To suffer an army that was foon expected to be an enemy, quietly to tortify themselves, when the inhabitants were both able and willing to cut them off, appeared to some warm spirits the height of folly; but the prudence and moderation of others, and especially the advice and recommendation of Congress, restrained their impetuosity. It was a fortunate circumstance for the colonies that the royal army was posted in New-England. The people of that northern country have their paffions more under the command of reason and interest, than in the southern latitudes, where a warmer fun excites a greater degree of irascibility. One rash offensive action against the royal forces at this early period, though successful, might have done great mischief

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to the cause of America. It would have lost them European friends, and weakened the disposition of the other colonies to affift them. The patient and the politic News England men, fully fensible of their fituation, submitted to many infults, and bridled their refentment. In civil wars or revolutions it is a matter of much confequence who ftrikes the first blow. The compassion of the world is in favour of the attacked, and the displeasure of good men on those who are the first to imbrue their hands in human blood. For the space of nine months after the arrival of General Gage, the behaviour of the people of Boston is particularly worthy of imitation, by those who wish to overturn established governments. They conducted their opposition with exquisite address. They avoided every kind of outrage and violence, preferred peace and good order among themselves, successfully engaged the other colonies to make a common cause with them, and counteracted General Gage so effectually as to prevent his doing any thing for his royal mafter, while by patience and moderation they skreened themselves from censure. Though refolved to bear as long as prudence and policy dictated, they were all the time preparing for the last extremity. They were furnishing themselves with arms and ammunition, and training their militia,

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Provisions were also collected and stored in different places, particularly at Concord, about 20 miles from Bofton. General Gage, though zealous for his royal master's interest, discovered a prevailing defire after a peaceable accommodation. He wished to prevent hostilities by depriving the inhabitants of the means necessary for carrying them on. With this view he determined to destroy the stores which he knew were collected for the support of a provincial army. Wishing to accomplish this without bloodshed, he took every precaution to effect it by furprife, and without alarming the country. o'clock at night 800 grenadiers and light infantry, the flower of the royal army, embarked at the Common, landed at Phipps's farm, and marched for Concord, under the command of lieutenant colonel Smith. Neither the fecrecy with which this expedition was planned-the privacy with which the troops marched out, nor an order that no one inhabitant should leave Boston, were sufficient to prevent intelligence from being fent to the country militia, of what was going on. About two in the morning 130 of the Lexington militia had affembled to oppose

them, but the air being chilly and intelligence respecting the regulars uncertain, they were dismissed with orders to appear again at beat of drum. They collected a fecond time to the number of 70, between 4 and 5 o'clock in the morning, and the British regulars soon after made their appearance. Major Pitcairn, who led the advanced corps, rode up to them and called out, " Difperfe you rebels, throw down your arms and disperse." They still continued in a body, on which he advanced neared-discharged his piftol-and ordered his foldiers to fire. This was done with a huzza. A dispersion of the militia was the confequence, but the firing of the regulars was nevertheless continued. Individuals finding they were fired upon, though difperfing, returned the fire. Three or four of the militia were killed on the green. A few more were thot after they had begun to disperse. The royal detachment proceeded on to Concord, and executed their commission. They disabled two 24 pounders-threw 50clb. of ball into rivers and wells, and broke in pieces about 60 barrels of flour. Mr. John Butterick of Concord, major of a minute regiment, not knowing what had paffed at Lexington, ordered his men not to give the first fire, that they might not be the aggreffors. Upon his approaching near the regulars, they fired, and killed captain Ifaac Davis, and one private of the provincial minutemen men, The fire was returned, and a skirmish ensued. The king's troops having done their bufinefs, began their retreat towards Boston. This was conducted with expedition, for the adjacent inhabitants had affembled in arms, and began to attack them in every direction. In their return to Lexington they were exceedingly annoyed, both by those who pressed on their rear, and others who pouring in from all fides, fired from behind stone walls, and fuch like coverts, which supplied the place of lines and redoubts. At Lexington the regulars were joined by a detachment of 900 men, under lord Piercy, which had been fent out by general Gage to fupport lieutenant-colonel Smith, This reinforcement having two pieces of cannon awed the provincials, and kept them at a greater distance, but they continued a constant, though irregular and scattering fire, which did great execution. The close firing from behind the walls by good markimen, put the regular troops in no imall con-

fusion, but they nevertheless kept up a brisk retreating fire on the militia and minute men. A little after sunser the regulars reached Bunker's-hill, worn down with excessive farigue, having marched that day between 30 and 40 miles.

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1775. On the next day they croffed Charlestown ferry, and re-

There never were more than 400 provincials engaged at one time, and often not so many. As some tired and gave out, others came up and took their places. There was scarcely any discipline observed among them. Officers and privates fired when they were ready, and saw a royal uniform without waiting for the word of command. Their knowledge of the country enabled them to gain opportunities by crossing fields and sences, and to act as slanking parties against the king's troops who kept to the main road.

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The regulars had 65 killed, 180 wounded, and 28 made prisoners. Of the provincials 50 were killed, and 38

wounded and miffing.

As arms were to decide the controversy, it was fortunate for the Americans that the first blood was drawn in New England. The inhabitants of that country are so connected with each other by descent, manners, religion, politics, and a general equality, that the killing of a single individual interested the whole, and made them consider it as a common cause. The blood of those who were killed at Lexington and Concord proved the firm cement of an extensive union.

April 22.

To prevent the people within Boston from co-operating with their countrymen without in case of an affault which was now daily expected, general Gage agreed with a committee of the town, that upon the inhabitants lodging their arms in Faneuil-hall or any other convenient place, under the care of the felectmen, all fuch inhabitants as were inclined, might depart from the town, with their families and effects. In five days after the ratification of this agreement, the inhabitants had lodged 1778 fire arms, 634 pistols, 273 bayonets and 38 blunder-The agreement was well observed in the beginning, but after a short time obstructions were thrown in the way of its final completion, on the plea that persons who went from Boston to bring in the goods of those who chose to continue within the town, were not properly treated. Congress remonstrated on the infraction of the agreement, but without effect. The general, on a farther confideration of the confequences of moving the whigs out of Boston, evaded it in a manner not consistent with good faith. He was in some measure compelled to adopt this dishonourable measure, from the clamor of

the tories, who alledged that none but enemies to the British government were disposed to remove, and that when they were all fafe with their families and effects, the town would be fet on fire. To prevent the provincials from obtaining supplies which they much wanted, a quibble was made on the meaning of the word effects, which was conftrued by the general as not including merchandize. By this conftruction, unwarranted by every rule of genuine interpretation, many who quitted the town were deprived of their usual resources for a support. Paffports were not univerfally refused, but were given out very flowly, and the bufiness was so conducted that families were divided-wives were feparated from their husbands, children from their parents, and the aged and infirm from their relations and friends. The general discovered a difinclination to part with the women and children, thinking that, on their account the provincials would be restrained from making an assault on the town. The felect-men gave repeated affurances that the inhabitants had delivered up their arms, but as a cover for violating the agreement, general Gage issued a proclamation, in which he afferted that he had full proof to the contrary. A few might have secreted some favourite arms, but nearly all the training arms were delivered up. this flimfy pretence the general facrificed his honour, to policy and the clamors of the tories. Contrary to good faith he detained many, though fairly entitled by agreement to go out, and when he admitted the departure of others he would not allow them to remove their families and effects.

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The provincial Congress of Massachusetts, which was in session at the time of the Lexington battle, dispatched an account of it to Great-Britain, accompanied with many depositions, to prove that the British troops were the aggressors. They also made an address to the inhabitants of Great-Britain, in which after complaining of their sufferings, they say, "these have not yet detached us from our royal sovereign; we profess to be his loyal and dutiful subjects, and though hardly dealt with, as we have been, are still ready with our lives and fortunes, to defend his person, crown, and dignity. Nevertheless, to the persecution and tyranny of his evil ministry, we will not tamely submit. Appealing to Heaven for the justice of our cause, we determine to die or be free." From the commencement

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commencement of hostilities, the dispute between Great. Britain and the colonies took a new direction.

Intelligence that the British troops had marched out of Boston into the country on some hostile purpose, being forwarded by expresses from one committee to another, great bodies of the militia, not only from Maffachusetts but the adjacent colonies, grafped their arms and march. ed to oppose them. The colonies were in such a state of irritability, that the least shock in any part was, by a powerful and sympathetic affection, instantaneously felt throughout the whole. The Americans who fell were revered by their countrymen, as martyrs who had died in the cause of liberty. Resentment against the British burned more strongly than ever. Martial rage took poffession of the breasts of thousands. Combinations were formed and affociations fubscribed, binding the inhabitant to one another by the facred ties of honour, religion, and love of country, to do whatever their public bodies directed for the preservation of their liberties. Hitherto the Americans had no regular army. From principles of policy they had cautiously avoided that measure, lest they might subject themselves to the charge of being aggresson. All their military regulars were carried on by their militia, and under the old established laws of the land. For the defence of the colonies, the inhabitants had been, from their early years, enrolled in companies, and taught the use of arms. The laws for this purpose had never been better observed than for some months previous to the Lexington battle. These military arrangements, which had been previously adopted for defending the colonies from hostile French and Indians, were on this occasion turned against the troops of the Parent State. Forts, magazines, and arfenals, by the constitution of the country, were in the keeping of his majesty. Immediately after the Lexington battle, these were for the most part taken possession of throughout the colonies, by parties of the provincial militia. Ticonderoga, in which was a small royal garrifon, was furprifed and taken by adventurers from different states. Public money which had been collected in consequence of previous grants, was also seized for common fervices. Before the commencement of hostilities these measures would have been condemned by the moderate even among the Americans, but that event justified a bolder line of opposition than had been adopted. Sundry citizens having been put to death by British troops, selfprefervation

preservation dictated measures which, if adopted under ther circumstances, would have difunited the colonists. One of the most important of this kind was the raising an army. Men of warm tempers, whose courage exseeded their prudence, had for months urged the necesfity of raifing troops; but they were restrained by the more moderate, who wished that the colonies might avoid extremities, or at least that they might not lead in bringing them on. The provincial Congress of Massachusetts being in fession at the time the battle of Lexington was fought, voted that " an army of 30,000 men be immediately raised, that 13,600 be of their own province, and that a letter and delegate be fent to the feveral colonies of New-Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode-Island," In confequence of this vote, the business of recruiting was begun, and in a short time a provincial army was paraded in the vicinity of Boston, which though far below what had been voted by the provincial Congress, was much superior in numbers to the royal army. The command of this force was given to general Ward.

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Had the British troops confined themselves to Boston, as before the 18th of April, the affembling an American army, though only for the purpose of observation and defence, would have appeared in the nature of a challenge, and would have made many lefs willing to support the people of Maffachusetts, but after the British had commenced hostilities the same measure was adopted without subjecting the authors of it to censure, and without giving offence or hazarding the union. The Lexington battle not only furnished the Americans with a justifying apology for raising an army, but inspired them with ideas of their own prowefs. Amidst the most animated declarations of facrificing fortune, and rifquing life itself for the fecurity of American rights, a fecret figh would frequently escape from the breasts of her most determined friends, for fear that they could not stand before the bravery and difcipline of British troops. Hoary fages would shake their heads and fay, " Your cause is good and I wish you fuccess, but I fear that your undisciplined valour must be overcome, in the unequal contest. After a few thousands of you have fallen, the provinces must ultimately bow to that power which has fo repeatedly humbled France and Spain." So confident were the British of their superiority in arms, that they feemed desirous that the contest might be brought to a military decision. Some of the distinguished 1775.

distinguished speakers in parliament had publicly afferted that the natives of America had nothing of the foldier in them, and that they were in no respect qualified to face a British army. European philosophers had published theories, fetting forth that not only vegetables and beafts. but that even men degenerated in the western hemisphere. Departing from the spirit of true philosophy, they over. looked the state of society in a new world, and charged a comparative inferiority, on every production that was Ame. The colonists themselves had imbibed opinion from their forefathers, that no people on earth were equal to those with whom they were about to contend. Impressed with high ideas of British superiority, and diffident of themselves, their best informed citizens, though willing to run all rifques, feared the confequence of an appeal to arms. The fuccess that attended their first military enterprize, in some degree banished these suggestions. Pa. haps in no subsequent battle did the Americans appear to greater advantage than in their first essay at Lexington, It is almost without parallel in military history, for the yeomanry of the country to come forward in fingle disjoint. ed manner, without order, and for the most part without officers, and by an irregular fire to put to flight troops equal in discipline to any in the world. In opposition to the bold affertions of fome, and the desponding fears of others, experience proved that Americans might effectually refit The diffident grew bold in their country's British troops. cause, and indulged in chearful hopes that Heaven would finally crown their labours with fuccess.

Soon after the Lexington battle, and in consequence of that event, not only the arms, ammunition, forts and fortifications in the colonies were secured for the use of the provincials, but regular forces were raised, and money struck for their support. These military arrangements were not confined to the New-England states, but were general throughout the colonies. The determination of the king and parliament to enforce submission to their acts, and the news of the Lexington battle, came to the distant provinces nearly about the same time. It was supposed by many that the latter was in consequence of the former, and that general Gage had recent orders to proceed im-

mediately to fubdue the refractory colonists.

From a variety of circumstances the Americans had good reason to conclude that hostilities would soon be carried on vigorously in Massachusetts, and also to appro-

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to military operations.

hend that, fooner or later, each province would be the heatre of war. "The more speedily, therefore, said they, we are prepared for that event, the better chance we have for defending ourselves." Previous to this period, or rather to the 19th of April 1775, the dispute had been carried on by the pen, or at most by affociations and legislative acts; but from this time forward it was conducted by the fword. The crifis was arrived when the colonies had no alternative, but either to fubmit to the mercy or to refift the power of Great-Britain. An unconquerable love of iberty could not brook the idea of submission, while reason more temperate in her decisions, suggested to the people their infufficiency to make effectual opposition. They were fully apprized of the power of Britain-they knew that her fleets covered the ocean, and that her flag had waved in triumph through the four quarters of the globe; but the animated language of the time was, "It is better to die freemen, than to live flaves." Though the justice of their cause, and the inspiration of liberty gave, in the opinion of difinterested judges a superiority to the writings of Americans, yet in the latter mode of conducting their opposition, the candid among themselves acknowledged an inferiority. Their form of government was deficient in that decision, dispatch, and coercion, which are necessary

Europeans, from their being generally unacquainted with fire arms are less easily taught the use of them than Americans, who are from their youth familiar with these instruments of war; yet on other accounts they are more susceptible of military habits. The proportion of necessitous men in the new world is small to that in the old.

To procure substistence is a powerful motive with an European to enlist, and the prospect of losing it makes him asraid to neglect his duty; but these incitements to the punctual discharge of military services, are wanting in America. In old countries the distinction of ranks and the submission of inseriors to superiors generally takes place, but in the new world an extreme sense of liberty and equality indisposes to that implicit obedience which is the soul of an army. The same causes which nurtured a spirit of independence in the colonies, were hostile to their military arrangements. It was not only from the different state of society in the two countries, but from a variety of local causes, that the Americans were not able to contend in arms, on equal terms, with their Parent

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State. From the first settlement of the British colonia. agriculture and commerce, but especially the former, ha been the favourite pursuits of their inhabitants. War wa s business abhorrent from their usual habits of life. The had never engaged in it from their own motion, nor is any other mode than as appendages to British troops, and under British establishments. By these means the military Spirit of the colonies had no opportunity of expanding is felf. At the commencement of hostilities, the British troop possessed a knowledge of the science and discipline of wat which could be acquired only by a long feries of applica tion and fubstantial establishments. Their equipments their artillery, and every other part of their apparatus for war approached perfection. To these important circumstances was added a high national spirit of pride, which had been greatly augmented by their fuccesses in their la contest with France and Spain. On the other hand the Americans were undisciplined, without experienced of cers, and without the shadow of military establishment In the wars which had been previously carried on, ing near the colonies, the provincials had been by their to spective legislatures, frequently added to the Britis groops, but the pride of the latter would not confider the former, who were without uniformity of drefs, or the perness of military airs, to be their equals. The provinci troops were, therefore, for the most part, assigned tolavices which though laborious, were not honourable.

The ignorance of the British generals commanding in the woods of America, sometimes involved them in difficuties from which they had been more than once relieved by the superior local knowledge of the colonial troops. These services were soon forgotten, and the moment the troops who performed them could be spared, they were disbanded. Such like obstacles had hitherto depressed military talents in America, but they were now overcome by the ardor of the people.

In the year 1775, a martial spirit pervaded all ranks of men in the colonies. They believed their liberties to be in danger, and were generally disposed to risque their lives for their establishment. Their ignorance of the military art, prevented their weighing the chances of we with that exactness of calculation which, if induged, might have damped their hopes. They conceived the there was little more to do than fight manfully for the country. They consoled themselves with the idea, the though

1775-

though their first attempt might be unsuccessful; their numbers would admit of a repetition of the experiment, till the invaders were finally exterminated. Not confidering that in modern war the longest purse decides oftener than the longest sword, they seared not the wealth of Britain. They both expected and wished that the whole dispute would be speedily settled in a few decisive engagements. Elevated with the love of liberty, and buoved above the fear of confequences, by an ardent military enthufiafm, unabated by calculations about the extent. duration, or probable iffue of the war, the people of America feconded the voice of their rulers, in an appeal to heaven for the vindication of their rights. At the time the colonies adopted these spirited resolutions, they posseffed not a fingle ship of war, nor so much as an armed reffel of any kind. It had often been fuggested that their feaport towns lay at the mercy of the navy of Great-Britain; this was both known and believed, but difregarded. The love of property was absorbed in the love of liberty. The animated votaries of the equal rights of human nature, confoled themselves with the idea that though their whole sea coast should be laid in ashes, they could retire to the western wilderness, and enjoy the luxury of being free; on this occasion it was observed in Congress by Christopher Gadiden, one of the South-Carolina delegates, " Our houses being constructed of brick, stone, and wood, though destroyed may be rebuilt, but liberty once gone is loft for ever."

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The fober discretion of the present age will more readily censure than admire, but can more easily admire than imitate the fervid zeal of the patriots of 1775, who in idea facrificed property in the cause of liberty, with the ease that they now facrifice almost every other consi-

deration for the acquifition of property.

The revenues of Britain were immense, and her people were habituated to the payment of large sums in every form which contributions to government have assumed; but the American colonies possess neither money nor funds, nor were their people accustomed to taxes equal to the exigencies of war. The contest having begun about taxation, to have raised money by taxes for carrying it on, would have been impolitic. The temper of the times precluded the necessary of attempting the dan-

1775-

gerous expedient, for fuch was the enthulialin of the day, that the colonists gave up both their perfonal fervices and their property to the public, on the vague promifes that they should at a future time be reimburfed. Without enquiring into the folidity of funds, or the precise period of payment, the refources of the country were commanded on general affurances, that all expences of the war should ultimately be equalifed. The Parent State abounded with experienced statesmen and officers, but the dependent form of government exercised in the colonies, precluded their citizens from gaining that practical knowledge which is acquired from being at the head of public departments. There were very few in the colonies who understood the business of providing for an army, and still fewer who had experience and knowledge to direct its operations. The disposition of the finances of the country, and the most effectual mode of drawing forth its refources, were subjects with which fcarce any of the inhabitants were acquainted. Arms and ammunition were almost wholly deficient; and though the country abounded with the materials of which they are manufactured, yet there was neither time nor artists enough to supply an army with the means of defence. The country was destitute both of fortifications and engineers. Amidst fo many dilcouragements there were fome flattering circumstances. The war could not be carried on by Great-Britain, but to a great disadvantage, and at an immense expense. It was easy for ministers at St. James's to plan campaigns, but hard was the fate of the officer from whom the execution of them in the woods of America was expected. The country was fo extensive, and abounded fo much with defiles, that by evacuating and retreating, the Americans though they could not conquer, yet might fave themselves from being conquered. The authors of the acts of parliament for restraining the trade of the colonies, were most acellent recruiting officers for the Congress. They imposed a necessity on thousands to become soldiers. All other bufiness being suspended, the whole resources of the country were applied in supporting an army. Though the colonists were without discipline, they possessed at

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tive valour. Though they had neither gold nor filver, they possessed a mine in the enthusiasm of their people. Paper for upwards of two years produced to them more solid advantages than Spain derived from her super-abounding precious metals. Though they had no ships to protect their trade or their towns, they had simplicity enough to live without the former, and enthusiasm enough to risque the latter, rather than submit to the power of Britain. They believed their cause to be just, and that heaven approved their exertions in defence of their rights. Zeal originating from such motives, supplied the place of discipline, and inspired a considence and military ardor which overleaped all difficulties.

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Refistance being resolved upon by the Americans the pulpit-the press-the bench and the bar, feverally laboured to unite and encourage them. The clergy of New-England were a numerous, learned and respectable body, who had a great afcendancy over the minds of their hearers. They connected religion and patriotism, and in their fermons and prayers, represented the cause of America as the cause of heaven. The Synod of New-York and Philadelphia, also sent forth a pastoral letter, which was publicly read in their churches. This earnestly recommended such sentiments and conduct as were fuitable to their fituation. Writers and printers followed in the rear of the preachers, and next to them had the greatest hand in animating their countrymen. Gentlemen of the bench and of the bar denied the charge of rebellion, and justified the refistance of the colonists. A distinction founded on law, between the king and his ministry, was introduced. The former, it was contended, could do no wrong. The crime of treason was charged. on the latter, for using the royal name to varnish their own unconstitutional measures. The phrase of a ministerial war became common, and was used as a medium for reconciling refistance with allegiance.

Coeval with the resolutions for organizing an army, was one appointing the 20th day of July, 1775, a day of public humiliation, fasting and prayer to Almighty God, to less their rightful sovereign king George, and to inspire him with wisdom to discern and pursue the true interest of his subjects; and that the British nation might be influenced to regard the things that belonged to her peace, before they were hid from her eyes—that the colonies Vol. I.

might be ever under the care and protection of a kind providence, and be prospered in all their interests-that America might foon behold a gracious interpolition of Heaven, for the redress of her many grievances; the restoration of her invaded rights, and a reconciliation with the Parent State, on terms constitutional and honourable to both." The forces which had been collected in Maffa. chusett's, were stationed in convenient places for guarding the country from farther excursions of the regulars from Boston. Breast works were also erected in different places for the same purpose. While both parties were attempting to carry off flock from the feveral islands with which the bay of Boston is agreeably diversified, fundry skirmishes took place. These were of real service to the Americans. They habituated them to danger, and perhaps much of the courage of old foldiers, is derived from an experimental conviction, that the chance of escaping unhurt from engagements is much greater than young recruits suppose.

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About the latter end of May a great part of the reinforcements ordered from Great-Britain, arrived at Boston. Three British Generals, Howe, Burgoyne and Clinton, whose behaviour in the preceding war had gained May 25. them great reputation, also arrived about the same time. General Gage, thus/reinforced, prepared for acting with

more decision, but before he proceeded to extremities he conceived it due to ancient forms to iffue a proclamation, holding forth to the inhabitants the alternative of peace

or war. He therefore offered pardon in the king's name June 12. to all who should forthwith lay down their arms, and return to their respective occupations and peaceable duties, excepting only from the benefit of that pardon, " Samuel Adams, and John Hancock, whose offences were said to be of too flagitious a nature to admit of any other confideration than that of condign punishment. He also proclaimed that not only the persons above named and excepted, but also all their adherents, affociates, and correspondents, should be deemed guilty of treason and nbellion, and treated accordingly. By this proclamation it was also declared, " that as the courts of judicature were thut, martial law should take place, till a due course of justice should be re-established. It was supposed that this proclamation was a prelude to hostilities, and preparations were accordingly made by the Americans. A confiderable height, by the name of Bunker's-hill, just at the entrance

entrance of the peninfula of Charlestown, was so situated 1775. as to make the possession of it a matter of great consequence, to either of the contending parties. Orders were June 16. therefore issued by the provincial commanders that a detachment of a thousand men should intrench upon this height. By some mistake Breed's hill, high and large like the other, but fituated nearer Boston, was marked out for the intrenchments, instead of Bunker's-hill. The provincials proceeded to Breed's-hill and worked with fo much diligence, that between midnight and the dawn of the morning, they had thrown up a fmall redoubt about 8 rods square. They kept such a profound silence that they were not heard by the British, on board their vessels, though very near. These having derived their first information of what was going on from the fight of the work near completion, began an inceffant firing upon them. The provincials bore this with firmness, and though they were only young foldiers continued to labour till they had thrown up a small breastwork, extending from the east fide of the redoubt to the bottom of the hill. As this eminence overlooked Boston, General Gage thought it necessary to drive the provincials from it. About noon therefore he detached Major-General Howe and Brigadier- June 17. General Pigot, with the flower of his army, confifting of four battalions, ten companies of the grenadiers and ten of light infantry, with a proportion of field artillery, to effect this business. These troops landed at Moreton's point, and formed after landing, but remained in that position till they were reinforced by a fecond detachment of light infantry and grenadier companies, a battalion of land forces and a battalion of marines making in the whole nearly 3000 men. While the troops who first landed were waiting for this reinforcement, the provincials for their farther fecurity, pulled up some adjoining post and rail fences, and fet them down in two parallel lines at a small distance from each other, and filled the space between with hay, which having been lately mowed, remained on the adjacent ground.

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The king's troops formed in two lines, and advanced lowly, to give their artillery time to demolish the American works. While the British were advancing to the ttack, they received orders to burn Charlestown. This ras not done because they were fired upon from the ouses in that town, but from the military policy of deriving enemies of a cover in their approaches. In a short

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time this ancient town, confisting of about 500 buildings, chiefly of wood, was in one great blaze. The lofty steeple of the meeting house formed a pyramid of fire above the rest, and struck the assonished eyes of numerous beholders with a magnificent but awful spectacle. In Boston the heights of every kind were covered with the citizens, and such of the king's troops as were not on duty. The hills around the adjacent country which afforded a safe and distinct view, were occupied by the inhabitants

of the country.

Thousands, both within and without Boston, were anxious spectators of the bloody scene. The honour of British troops beat high in the breasts of many, while others with keener fensibility, felt for the liberties of a great and growing country. The British moved on but flowly, which gave the provincials a better opportunity for taking aim. The latter in general referved themselves till their adverfaries were within ten or twelve rods, but then began a furious discharge of small arms. The stream of the American fire was so incessant, and did so great execution that the king's troops retreated in diforder and precipitation. Their officers rallied them and pushed them forward with their fwords, but they returned to the attack with great reluctance. The Americans again referved their fire till their adverfaries were near, and then put them a fecond time to flight. General Howe and the officers redoubled their exertions, and were again successful, though the foldiers discovered a great aversion to going on. By this time the powder of the Americans began to far to fail that they were not able to keep up the fame brift fire as before. The British also brought some cannon to bear which saked the infide of the breast work from end to end. The fire from the ships, batteries, and field artillery was redoubled-the foldiers in the rear were goaded on by their officers. The redoubt was attacked on three fides at once. Under these circumstances a retreat from it was ordered, but the provincials delayed, and made refistance with their discharged muskets as if the had been clubs, fo long as the king's troops who easily mounted the works had half filled the redoubt before it was given up to them.

While these operations were going on at the break work and redoubt, the British light infantry were at tempting to force the lest point of the former, that they might take the American line in stank. Though the

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shibited the most undaunted courage, they met with an opposition which called for its greatest exertions. The provincials here, in like manner, referved their fire till their adversaries were near, and then poured it upon the light infantry, with fuch an inceffant stream, and in fo true a direction as mowed down their ranks. The engagement was kept up on both fides with great refolution, The perfevering exertions of the king's troops could not compel the Americans to retreat, till they observed that their main body had left the hill. This, when begun, exposed them to new danger, for it could not be effected but by marching over Charlestown neck, every part of which was raked by the shot of the Glasgow man of war, and of two floating batteries. The inceffant fire kept up across this neck prevented any confiderable reinforcement from joining their countrymen who were engaged; but the few who fell on their retreat, over the fame ground proved, that the apprehensions of those provincial officers who declined paffing over to fuccour their companions, were without any folid foundation.

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they they bited The number of Americans engaged, amounted only to 1500. It was apprehended that the conquerors would push the advantage they had gained, and march immediately to American head quarters at Cambridge, but they advanced no farther than Bunker's-hill. There they threw up works for their own fecurity. The provincials did the same on Prospect-hill in front of them. were guarding against an attack, and both were in a bad condition to receive one. The loss of the peninfula depressed the spirits of the Americans, and their great loss of men produced the same effect on the British. There have been few bartles in modern wars, in which all circumflances confidered, there was a greater destruction of men The loss of the British, than in this short engagement, as acknowledged by General Gage, amounted to 1054. Nineteen commissioned officers were killed, and 70 more were wounded. The battle of Quebec in 1759, which gave Great-Britain the province of Canada, was not fo destructive to British officers as this affair of a slight intrenchment, the work only of a few hours. officers fuffered fo much, must be imputed to their being aimed at. None of the provincials in this engagement were riflemen, but they were all good markimen. whole of their previous military knowledge had been de1775

derived from hunting, and the ordinary amusements of fportimen. The dexterity which by long habit they had acquired in hitting beafts, birds and marks, was fatally applied to the destruction of British officers. From their fall much confusion was expected. They were therefore particularly fingled out. Most of those who were near the person of General Howe were either killed or wounded, but the General, though he greatly exposed himself, was unhurt. The light infantry and grenadiers loft threefourths of their men. Of one company not more than five, and of another, not more than fourteen escaped, The unexpected resistance of the Americans was such as wiped away the reproaches of cowardice, which had been cast on them by their enemies in Britain. The spirited conduct of the British officers merited and obtained great applause, but the provincials were justly entitled to a large portion of the fame, for having made the utmost exertions of their adversaries necessary to dislodge them from lines

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which were the work only of a fingle night.

The Americans loft five pieces of cannon. Their killed amounted to 139. Their wounded and miffing to Thirty of the former fell into the hands of the conquerors. They particularly regretted the death of To the purest patriotism and most un-General Warren. daunted bravery, he added the virtues of domestic life, the eloquence of an accomplished orator, and the wisdom of an able statesman. Nothing but a regard to the liberty of his country induced him to oppose the measures of government. He aimed not at a separation from, but a coalition with the Mother Country. He took an active part in defence of his country, not that he might be applauded and rewarded for a patriotic spirit, but because he was, in the best sense of the word, a real patriot. Having no interested or personal views to answer, the friends of liberty confided in his integrity. The foundness of his judgment, and his abilities as a public speaker, enabled him to make a distinguished figure in public councils, but his intrepidity and active zeal, induced his countrymen to place him in the military line, Within four days after he was appointed a Major-General, he fell a noble facrifice to a cause which he had espoused from the purest princi-Like Hambden he lived, and like Hambden he ples. died, univerfally beloved, and univerfally regretted. His many virtues were celebrated in an elegant eulogium written by Dr. Rush, in language equal to

the illustrious subject. The burning of Charlestown, 1775. though a place of great trade did not discourage the provincials. It excited refentment and execration, but not any disposition to submit. Such was the high toned state of the public mind, and so great the indifference for property when put in competition with liberty, that military conflagrations, though they diffressed and impoverished, had no tendency to fubdue the colonists. They might answer in the old world, but were not calculated for the new, where the war was undertaken, not for a change of masters, but for securing essential rights. The action at Breed's-hill, or Bunker's-hill, as it has been commonly called, produced many and very important confequences. It taught the British so much respect for Americans intrenched behind works, that their fubfequent operations were retarded with a caution that wasted away a whole campaign, to very little purpose. It added to the confidence the Americans began to have in their own abilities, but inferences, very injurious to the future interests of America, were drawn from the good conduct of the new troops on that memorable day. It inspired some of the leading members of Congress, with such high ideas of what might be done by militia, or men engaged for a short term of enlistment, that it was long before they affented to the establishment of a permanent army. Not distinguishing the continued exertions of an army through a feries of years, from the gallant efforts of the yeomanry of the country, led directly to action, they were flow in admitting the neceffity of permanent troops. They conceived the country might be defended by the occasional exertions of her ions, without the expence and danger of an army engaged for the war. In the progress of hostilities, as will appear in the fequel, the militia lost much of their first ardor. while leading men in the councils of America, trusting to its continuance, neglected the proper time of recruiting for a feries of years. From the want of perseverance in the militia, and the want of a disciplined standing army, the cause for which arms were at first taken up, was more than once brought to the brink of destruction.

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1775. The second Congress meets and organises a regular Continental army—makes sundry public addresses, and petitions the King, &c. Transactions in Massachusetts.

> T has already been mentioned, that Congress previous to its diffolution, on the 26th of October, 1774, recommended to the colonies, to chuse members for another to meet on the 10th of May 1775, unless the redress of their grievances was previously obtained. A circular letter had been addressed by Lord Dartmouth, to the feveral colonial governors, requesting their interference to prevent the meeting of this fecond Congress: but minifterial requifitions had loft their influence, delegates were elected not only for the twelve colonies that were before represented, but also for the parish of St. John's in Georgia, and in July following, for the whole province. The time of the meeting of this fecond Congress was fixed at fo distant a day, that an opportunity might be afforded for obtaining information of the plans adopted by the British parliament in the winter of 1774, 1775. Had these been favourable, the delegates would either not have met, or dispersed after a short session, but as the resolution was then fixed to compel the fubmiffion of the colonies, and hostilities had already commenced, the meeting of Congress on the 10th of May, which was at first eventual, became fixed.

May 10.

On their meeting, they chose Peyton Randolph for their president, and Charles Thompson for their secretary. On the next day Mr. Hancock laid before them a variety of depositions, proving that the king's troops were the aggressors in the late battle at Lexington, together with sundy papers relative to the great events which had lately taken place in Massachusetts: Whereupon Congress resolved itself into a committee of the whole, to take into consideration the state of America. They proceeded in the same line of moderation and sirmness, which marked the acts of their predecessors in the past year.

Congress for advice, how they should conduct themselves with regard to the troops expected to land there, they were May 15. advised "to act on the defensive so long as might be con-

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fiftent with their fafety-to permit the troops to remain in

the barracks, fo long as they behaved peaceably, but not to futier fortifications to be erected, or any fteps to be taken for cutting off the communication between the May 17town and country." Congress also resolved, " That exportation to all parts of British America, which had not adopted their affociation, should immediately cease;" and that " no provision of any kind, or other necessaries be furnished to the British fisheries on the American coasts," June 2. And "that no bill of exchange, draught, or order, of any officer in the British army or navy, their agents or contractors, be received or negociated, or any money supplied them, by any person in America—that no provisions or necessaries of any kind, be furnished or supplied, to or for the use of the British army or navy, in the colony of Masfachusetts Bay-that no vessel employed in transporting British troops to America, or from one part of North America to another, or warlike flores or provisions for the faid troops, be freighted or furnished with provisions or any necessaries." These resolutions may be considered as the counterpart of the British acts for restraining the commerce, and prohibiting the fisheries of the colonies. They were calculated to bring diffress on the British iflands in the West-Indies, whose chief dependence for subfiftence, was on the importation of provision from the They also occasioned new difficulties American continent. in the support of the British army and fisheries. The colonists were so much indebted to Great-Britain, that government bills for the most part found among them a ready market. A war in the colonies was therefore made subfervient to commerce, by encreasing the fources of remittance. . .. is enabled the Mother Country, in a great de-

gree, to supply her troops without shipping money out of

the kingdom. From the operation of these resolutions,

advantages of this nature were not only cut off, but the

supply of the British army rendered both precarious and ex-

pensive. In consequence of the interdiction of the Ame-

rican fisheries, great profits were expected by British ad-

venturers in that line. Such frequently found it most convenient to obtain supplies in America for carrying on their fisheries; but as Great-Britain had deprived the colonists

of all benefits from that quarter, they now in their turn, interdicted all fupplies from being furnished to British fish-

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ermen. To obviate this unexpected embarrassment, several of the vessels employed in this business, were obliged to return home, to bring out provisions for their affociates. These restrictive resolutions, were not so much the effect of resentment as of policy. The colonists conceived, that by distressing the British commerce, they would encrease the number of those who would interest themselves in their behalf.

The new Congress had convened but a few days when their venerable president Peyton Randolph, was under a necessity of returning home. On his departure John Handcock was unanimously chosen his successor. The objects of deliberation presented to this new Congress were, if possible, more important than those which in the preceding year, had engaged the attention of their predeceffors. The colonists had now experienced the inefficacy of those measures, from which relief had been formerly They found a new parliament disposed to run all risques in inforcing their submission. They also understood that administration was united against them, and its members firmly established in their places. Hostilities were commenced. Reinforcements had arrived, and more were daily expected. Added to this, they had information that their adversaries had taken measures to secure the friendship and co-operation of the Indians; and also of the Canadians.

The coercion of the colonies being refolved upon, and their conquest supposed to be inevitable, the British ministry judged that it would be for the interest of both countries to proceed in that vigorous course, which bid fairest for the speediest attainment of their object. They hoped by pressing the colonists on all quarters, to intimidate opposition, and ultimately to lessen the effusion of human blood.

In this awful crifis Congress had but a choice of difficulties. The New-England states had already organised an army and blockaded General Gage. To desert them would have been contrary to plighted faith and to sound policy. To support them would make the war general, and involve all the provinces in one general promiscuous state of hostility. The resolution of the people in favour of the latter was fixed, and only wanted public saction for its operation. Congress therefore resolved "that for the express purpose of desending and securing the colonies, and preserving them in safety, against all attempts to carry the late acts of parliament into execution, by force of arms, they

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they be immediately put in a flate of defence; but as they wished for a reftoration of the harmony formerly sublisting between the Mother Country and the colonies, to the promotion of this most desirable reconciliation, an humble and dutiful petition be presented to his majesty." To refist and to petition were coeval resolutions. As freemen they could not tamely fubmit, but as loyal fubjects, withing for peace as far as was compatible with their rights, they once more, in the character of petitioners, humbly stated their grievances to the common father of the empire. To diffunde the Canadians from co-operating with the British, they again addressed them, representing the pernicious tendency of the Quebec act, and apologizing for their taking Ticonderoga and Crown-Point, as measures which were dictated by the great law of felf-prefervation. About the fame time Congress took measures for warding off the danger that threatened their frontier inhabitants from Indians, Commissioners to treat with them were appointed, and a supply of goods for their use was ordered. A talk was also prepared by Congress, and transmitted to them, in which the controversy between Great-Britain and her colonies was explained, in a familar Indian style. They were told that they had no concern in the family quarrel, and were urged by the ties of ancient friendship and a common birth place, to remain at home, keep their hatchet buried deep, and to join neither fide.

The novel fituation of Massachusetts made it necessary for the ruling powers of that province to ask the advice of Congress on a very interesting subject, " The taking up and exercising the powers of civil government." For many months they had been kept together in tolerable peace and order by the force of ancient habits, under the simple style of recommendation and advice from popular bodies, invested with no legislative authority. But as war now raged in their borders, and a numerous army was actually raised, some more efficient form of government became necessary. At this early day it neither comported with the wishes nor the designs of the colonists to erect forms of government independent of Great-Britain, Congress therefore recommended only such regulations as were immediately necessary, and these were conformed as near as possible to the spirit and substance of the charter, and were only to last till a governor of his majesty's appointment would confent to govern the colony according to its

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On the same principles of necessity, another assumption of new powers became unavoidable. The great intercourse that daily took place throughout the colonies, pointed out the propriety of establishing a general post-office. This was accordingly done, and Dr. Franklin, who had by royal authority been dismissed from a similar employment about three years before, was appointed by his country, the head of the new department.

While Congress was making arrangements for their proposed continental army, it was thought expedient once more to address the inhabitants of Great-Britain, and to publish to the world a declaration fetting forth their reafons for taking up arms-to address the speaker and gentlemen of the affembly of Jamaica, and the inhabitants of Ireland, and also to prefer a second humble petition to the king. In their address to the inhabitants of Great-Britain, they again vindicated themselves from the charge of aiming at independency, professed their willingness to fubmit to the feveral acts of trade and navigation which were passed before the year 1763, recapitulated their reafons for rejecting lord North's conciliatory motion-flated the hardships they suffered from the operations of the royal army in Boston, and infinuated the danger the inhabitants of Britain would be in of lofing their freedom, in case their American brethren were subdued,

In their declination, setting forth the causes and necessity of their taking up arms, they enumerated the injuris they had received, and the methods taken by the British ministry to compel their submission, and then said, "We are reduced to the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers, or resistance by force. The latter is our choice. We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery." They afferted "that so reign assistance was undoubtedly attainable." This was not founded on any private information, but was an opinion derived from their knowledge of the principles of policy, by which states usually regulate their conduct towards each other.

In their address to the speaker and gentlemen of the assembly of Jamaica, they dilated on the arbitrary systems of the British ministry, and informed them that in order to obtain a redress of their grievances, they had appealed to the justice, humanity, and interest of Great-Britain. They stated, that to make their schemes of non-importation

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and non-exportation produce the defired effects, they were obliged to extend them to the islands. "From that necessity, and from that alone, said they, our conduct has proceeded." They concluded with saying, the peculiar situation of your island forbids your affistance, but we have your good wishes—from the good wishes of the friends of liberty and minkind we shall always derive consolation."

In their address to the people of Ireland they recapitulated their grievances, stated their humble petitions, and the neglect with which they had been treated. "In defence of our persons and properties under actual violations, said they, we have taken up arms. When that violence shall be removed, and hostilities cease on the part of the ag-

greffors, they shall cease on our part also."

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These several addresses were executed in a masterly manner, and were well calculated to make friends to the colonies. But their petition to the king, which was drawn up at the same time, produced more solid advantages in favour of the American cause, than any other of their productions. This was in a great measure carried through Congress by Mr. Dickinson. Several members, judging from the violence with which parliament proceeded against the colonies, were of opinion that farther petitions were nugatory; but this worthy citizen, a friend to both countries, and devoted to a reconciliation on conftitutional principles, urged the expediency and policy of trying once more the effect of an humble, decent, and firm petition, to the common head of the empire. The high opinion that was conceived of his patriotism and abilities, induced the members to affent to the measure, though they generally conceived it to be labour loft. The petition agreed upon was the work of Mr. Dickinson's pen. In this, among other things, it was stated, " that notwithstanding their sufferings, they had retained too high a regard for the kingdom from which they derived their origin, to request such a reconciliation as might in any manner be inconfiftent with her dignity and welfare. Attached to his majesty's person, family, and government, with all the devotion that principle and affection can inspire, connected with Great-Britain by the strongest ties that can unite fociety, and deploring every event that tended in any degree to weaken them, they not only most fervently defired the former harmony between her and the colonies to be reftored, but that a concord might be effablished between them, upon so firm a basis as to perpetuate

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its bleffings, uninterrupted by any future diffentions, to fucceeding generations, in both countries. They therefore beseeched that his majesty would be pleased to direct some mode by which the united applications of his faithful colonists to the throne, in pursuance of their common councils, might be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation." By this last clause Congress meant that the Mother Country should propose a plan for establishing by compact something like Magna Charta for the colonies. They did not aim at a total exemption from the control of parliament, nor were they unwilling to contribute in their own way, to the expences of government; but they feared the horrors of war less than submission to unlimited parliamentary supremacy. They wished for an amicable compact in which doubtful, undefined points, should be afcertained fo as to fecure that proportion of authority and liberty which would be for the general good of the whole empire. They fancied themselves in the condition of the barons at Runnymede; but with this difference, that in addition to opposing the king, they had also to oppose the parliament. The difference was more nominal than real, for in the latter case the king and parliament stood precisely in the same relation to the people of America, which sublisted in the former between the king and people of England. In both, popular leaders were contending with the fovereign for the privileges of subjects. This well-meant petition was prefented on September off, 1775, by Mr. Penn and Mr. Lee, and on the 4th lord Dartmouth informed them, "that to it no answer would be given." This slight contributed not a little to the union and perseverance of the colonists. When pressed by the calamities of war, a doubt would fometimes arise in the minds of scrupulous persons, that they had been too hasty in their opposition to their protecting Parent State. To fuch it was usual to present the second petition of Congress to the king, observing thereon, that all the blood and all the guilt of the war, must be charged on British, and not on American counsels. Though the colonists were accused in a speech from the throne, as meaning only, "to amuse by vague expressions of attachment to the Parent State, and the strongest protestations of loyalty to their king, while they were preparing for a general revolt, and that their rebellious war was manifestly carried on for the purpose of establishing an independent empire." Yet at that time, and for months after, a redress of grievances was their ultimate aim. Conscious of this intention,

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and affenting in the fincerity of their fouls to the fubmiffive language of their petition, they ill brooked the conempt with which their joint supplication was treated, and fill worfe, that they should be charged from the throne with studied duplicity. Nothing contributes, more to the fuccess of revolutions, than moderation. Intemperate zealots overshoot themselves, and soon spend their force, while the calm and dispassionate persevere to the end. The bulk of the people in civil commotions are influenced to a choice of fides, by the general complexion of the measures adopted by the respective parties. When these appear to be dictated by justice and prudence, and to be uninfluenced by passion, ambition or avarice, they are difposed to favour them. Such was the effect of this second petition, through a long and trying war, in which men of ferious reflection were often called upon to examine the rectitude of their conduct.

Though the refusal of an answer to this renewed application of Congress to the king, was censured by numbers in Great-Britain, as well as in the colonies, yet the partisans of ministry varnished the measure as proper and ex-They contended that the petition, as it contained no offer of submission, was unavailing, as a ground work of negociation. Nothing was farther from the thoughts of Congress than such concessions as were expected in Great-Britain. They conceived themselves to be more finned against than finning. They claimed a redress of grievances as a matter of right, but were persuaded that concessions for this purpose were acts of justice and not of humiliation, and therefore could not be difgraceful to those by whom they were made. To prevent future altercations they wished for an amicable compact to ascertain the extent of parliamentary supremacy. The Mother Country wished for absolute submission to her authority, the colonists for a repeal of every act that imposed taxes, or that interfered in their internal legislation. The minitry of England being determined not to repeal thefe acts, and the Congress equally determined not to submit to them, the claims of the two countries were so wide of each other as to afford no reasonable ground to expect a compromise. It was therefore concluded, that any notice taken of the petition would only afford an opportunity for the colonies to prepare themselves for the last extremity.

A military opposition to the armies of Great-Britain being resolved upon by the colonies, it became an object

of confequence to fix on a proper person to conduct the opposition. Many of the colonists had titles of high rank in the militia, and feveral had feen fomething of real fervice in the late war between France and England; but there was no individual of fuch superior military experience a to entitle him to a decided pre-eminence, or even to qualif him, on that ground, to contend on equal terms with the British masters of the art of war. In elevating one man, by the free voice of an invaded country, to the command of thousands of his equal fellow citizens, no consideration was regarded but the interest of the community. To bind the uninvaded provinces more closely to the common cause, po-

Among the feuthern colonies Virginia, for number

licy directed the views of Congress to the south.

wealth, and influence, flood pre-eminent. To attach h respectable a colony to the aid of Massachusetts, by select. ing a commander in chief from that quarter, was not les warranted by the great military genuis of one of her diffinguished citizens, than dictated by found policy. George Washington was, by an unanimous vote appointed, commander in chief of all the forces raifed, or to be raifed, for June 15. the defence of the colonies. It was a fortunate circumstance attending his election, that it was accompanied with no competition, and followed by no envy. That same go neral impulse on the public mind, which led the colonists to agree in many other particulars, pointed to him as the mot proper person for presiding over the military arrangements of America. Not only Congress but the inhabitants in the east and west, in the north and the south, as well before at the time of embodying a continental army were in a great degree unanimous in his favour. An attempt to draw the character of this truly great man would look like flatter, Posterity will doubtless do it justice. His actions, especial now, while fresh in remembrance, are his amplest paneg-Suffice it, in his life-time, only to particularife the qualities, which being more common, may be mentioned without offending the delicate sensibility of the most mode

General Washington was born on the 11th of February 1732. His education was fuch as favoured the production of a folid mind and a vigorous body. Mountain air, abudant exercise in the open country—the wholesome toils the chace, and the delightful scenes of rural life, expande his limbs to an unusual but graceful and well proportioned

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fize. His youth was fpent in the acquisition of useful knowledge, and in pursuits, tending to the improvement of his fortune, or the benefit of his country. Fitted more for active, than for speculative life, he devoted the greater proportion of his time to the former, but this was amply compenfated by his being frequently in fuch fituations, as called forth the powers of his mind, and strengthened them by repeated exercise. Early in life, in obedience to his country's call, he entered the military line, and began his career of fame in oppoling that power, in concert with whose troops, he had acquired his last and most distinguished honours. He was with General Braddock in 1755, when that unfortunate officer from an excess of bravery, chose rather to facrifice his army than retreat from an unfeen foe. remains of that unfortunate corps were brought off the field of battle chiefly by the address and good conduct of Colonel Washington. After the peace of Paris 1763, he retired to his estate, and with great industry and success pursued the arts of peaceful life. When the proceedings of the British parliament alarmed the colonists with apprehensions that a blow was levelled at their liberties, he again came forward into public view, and was appointed a delegate to the Congress, which met in September 1774. Possessed of a large proportion of common fense directed by a found judgment, he was better fitted for the exalted station to which he was called, than many others who to a greater brilliancy of parts frequently add the eccentricity of original genius. Engaged in the busy scenes of life, he knew human nature, and the most proper method of accomplishing. proposed objects. His passions were subdued and kept in subjection to reason. His soul superior to party spirit, to prejudice and illiberal views, moved according to the impulses it received from an honest heart, a good understanding, common sense and a sound judgment. He was habituated to view things on every fide, to confider them in all relations, and to trace the possible and probable consequences of proposed measures. Much addicted to close thinking, his mind was confrantly employed. By frequent exercise, his understanding and judgment expanded so as to be able to discern truth, and to know what was proper to be done in the most difficult conjunctures.

Soon after General Washington was appointed commander in chief of the American army, Four Major-Vol. I. O Generals. 1775.

Generals, one Adjutant-general, with the rank of a Brigadier, and eight Brigadiers-general were appointed in subordination to him which were as follows:

1st. Major-General	Artemas Ward.
2d.	Charles Lee.
3d.	Philip Schuyler.
4th.	Ifrael Putnam.
Adjutant-General.	Horatio Gates.
The 8 Brigadiers were,	the enductor of the emit
ıft.	Seth Pomeroy.
2d. Total administration	Richard Montgomer
3d.	David Woofter.
4th	William Heath.
5th.	Joseph Spencer.
6th. 10 anna bas all la	John Thomas.
7th.	John Sullivan.
8th.	Nathaniel Greene.

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General Washington replied to the president of Congress, announcing his appointment in the following words:

Mr. President,

Though I am truly fenfible of the high honour done me in this appointment, yet I feel great diffress from a conficiousness, that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust: however, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their fervice, and for support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks for this distinguished testimony of their approbation.

"But left fome unlucky event should happen unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare with the utmost fincerity, I do not think myself equal to the com-

mand I am honoured with.

"As to pay, fir, I beg leave to affure the Congres, that as no pecuniary confideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment, at the expence of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expences. Those I doubt not they will discharge, and that it all I desire."

A special commission was drawn up and presented to

him and at the fame time an unanimous resolution was adopted by Congress, " That they would maintain and affift him, and adhere to him with their lives and fortunes in the cause of American liberty." Inftructions were also given him for his government, by which after reciting various particulars he was directed, " to destroy or make prisoners of all persons who now are, or who hereafter shall appear in arms against the good people of the colonies:" but the whole was fummed up in authorifing him " to order and dispose of the army under his command as might be most advantageous for obtaining the end for which it had been raised, making it his special care in discharge of the great trust committed to him, that the liberties of America received no detriment." About the same time twelve companies of riflemen were ordered to be raised in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. The men to the amount of 1430 were procured and forwarded with great expedition. They had to march from 4 to 700 miles, 14-22. and yet the whole business was compleated and they joined the American army at Cambridge, in less than two months from the day on which the first resolution for raising them was agreed to.

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Coeval with the refolution for railing an army, was another for emitting a fum not exceeding two millions of Spanish milled dollars in bills of credit for the defence of America, and the colonies were pledged for the redemption of them. This fum was encreased from time to time by farther emissions. The colonies having neither money nor revenues at their command, were forced to adopt this expedient, the only one which was in their power for supporting an army. No one delegate opposed the measure. had been the credit of the former emissions of paper in the greater part of the colonies, that very few at that time forelaw or apprehended the consequences of unfunded paper emissions, but had all the consequences which resulted from this measure in the course of the war been foreseen, it must notwithstanding have been adopted, for it was a less evil, that there should be a general wreck of property, than that the effential rights and liberties of a growing country should be loft. A happy ignorance of future events combined with the ardor of the times, prevented many reflections on this subject, and gave credit and circulation to these bills of cre-

General Washington soon after his appointment to the command of the American army fet out for the camp at Cambridge. On his way thither, he received an address

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from the provincial Congress of New-York, in which they expressed their joy at his appointment. They also faid, "we have the fullest affurances that whenever this important contest shall be decided by that fondest wish of each American foul, an accommodation with our Mother Country, you will chearfully refign the important deposit committed into your hands, and re-affume the character of our worthiest citizen. The general after declaring his gratitude for the regard shewn him, added, " Be affured that every exertion of my worthy colleagues and myfelf, will be extended to the re-establishment of peace and harmony between the Mother Country and these colonies. As to the fatal but necessary operations of war, when we assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen, and we shall most fincerely rejoice with you in that happy hour, when the re-establishment of American liberty, on the most firm and folid foundations shall enable us to return to our private stations, in the bosom of a free, peaceful, and happy country."

The General on his way to camp was treated with the highest honours in every place through which he passed. Large detachments of volunteers composed of private gentlemen turned out to escort him. A committee from the Massachusetts Congress received him about 100 miles from Boston, and conducted him to the army. He was foon after addressed by the Congress of that colony in the most affectionate manner, in his answer he said, "Gentlemen, your kind congratulations on my appointment and arrival, demand my warmest acknowledgments, and will ever be retained in grateful remembrance. In exchanging the enjoyments of domestic life for the duties of my present ho nourable but arduous station, I only emulate the virtue and public spirit of the whole province of Massachusetts, which with a firmness and patriotism without example, has facrificed all the comforts of focial and political life, in support of the rights of mankind and the welfare of our common courtry. My highest ambition is to be the happy instrument of vindicating these rights, and to see this devoted province

again restored to peace, liberty and fafety."

circles on bayings, so placed

When General Washington arrived at Cambridge, he was received with the joyful acclamations of the American army. At the head of his troops he published a declaration, previously drawn up by Congress, in the nature of a ma nifesto, setting forth the reasons for taking up arms. In this

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this, after enumerating various grievances of the colonies, and vindicating them from a premeditated defign of establishing independent states, it was added, "In our own native land, in defence of the freedom which is our birthright, and which we ever enjoyed until the late violation of it—for the protection of our property, acquired solely by the industry of our forefathers and ourselves, against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms, we shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors, and all danger of their being renewed, shall be removed, and not before."

When General Washington joined the American army, he found the British intrenched on Bunker's-hill, having also three floating batteries in Mystic river, and a twenty gun ship below the ferry, between Boston and Charlestown. They had also a battery on Copse's-hill, and were strongly fortisted on the neck. The Americans were entrenched at Winter-hill, Prospect-hill, and Roxbury, communicating with one another by small posts, over a distance of ten miles. There were also parties stationed in several towns along the sea-coast. They had neither engineers to plan suitable works, nor sufficient tools for their erection.

In the American camp was collected a large body of men, but without those conveniencies which ancient establishments have introduced for the comfort of regular armies. Instead of tents, fails now rendered useless by the obstructions of commerce were applied for their covering ; but even of them, there was not a fufficiency. The American foldiers having joined the camp in all that variety of clothing which they used in their daily labour, were without uniformity of dress. To abolish provincial distinctions, the hunting shirt was introduced. They were also without those heads of departments in the line of commissaries or quarter-masters, which are necessary for the regular and economical supplies of armies. The troops from Connecticut had proper officers appointed to procure them supplies, but they who came from the other colonies were not fo well furnished. Individuals brought to camp their own provisions on their own horses. In some parts committees of supplies were appointed, who purchased necessaries at public expence, sent them on to camp, and distributed them to such as were in want, without any regularity or fystem; the country afforded provisions, and nothing more was wanting to supply the army

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than proper fystems for their collection and distribution. Other articles, though equally necessary, were almost wholly deficient, and could not be procured but with difficulty. On the 4th of August the whole stock of powder in the American camp, and in the public magazines of the four New England provinces, would make but little more than nine rounds a man. The continental army remained in this destitute condition for a fortnight or more. This was generally known among themselves, and was also communicated to the British, by a deserter, but they suspecting a plot, would not believe it. A supply of a few tons was fent on to them from the committee of Elizabeth-town, but this was done privately, left the adjacent inhabitants, who were equally deftitute should stop it for their own use. The public rulers in Massachusetts issued a recommendation to the inhabitants, not to fire a gun at beaft, bird or mark, in order that they might hufband their little stock for the more necessary purpose of shooting men. A supply of several thousand pounds weight of powder, was foon after obtained from Africa in exchange for New-England rum. This was managed with fo much address, that every ounce for sale in the British forts on the African coasts, was purchased up and brought off for the use of the Americans.

Embarrassiments from various quarters occurred in the formation of a continental army. The appointment of general officers made by Congress, was not satisfactory. Enterprising leaders had come forward with their followers on the commencement of hostilities, without scrupulous attention to rank. When these were all blended together, it was impossible to assign to every officer the station which his services merited, or his vanity demanded. Materials for a good army were collected. The husbandmen who slew to arms were active, zealous, and of unquestionable courage, but to introduce discipline and subordination, among free men who were habituated to think for

themselves, was an arduous labour.

The want of fystem and of union, under proper heads, pervaded every department. From the circumstance that the persons employed in providing necessaries for the army were unconnected with each other, much waste and unnecessary delays were occasioned. The troops of the different colonies came into service under varied establishments—some were enlisted with the express condition of choosing their officers. The rations promised by the local legilaring

tures varied both as to quantity, quality and price. To form one uniform mals of these discordant materials, and to subject the licentiousness of independent freemen to the controul of military discipline, was a delicate and difficult

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The continental army put under the command of General Washington, amounted to about 14,500 men. had been so judiciously stationed round Boston, as to confine the British to the town, and to exclude them from the forage and provisions which the adjacent country and islands in Boston-bay afforded. This force was thrown into three grand divisions. General Ward commanded the right wing at Roxbury. General Lee the left at Prospect-hill, and the centre was commanded by general Washington. In arranging the army, the military skill of Adjutant-general Gates was of great fervice. Method and punctuality were introduced. The officers and privates were taught to know their respective places, and to have the mechanism and movements as well as the name of an army.

When some effectual pains had been taken to discipline the army, it was found that the term for which enliftments had taken place, was on the point of expiring. The troops from Connecticut and Rhode-Island were only engaged to the first day of December 1775, and no part of the army longer than the 1st day of January 1776. Such mistaken apprehensions respecting the future conduct of Great-Britain prevailed, that many thought the appearance of a determined spirit of resistance would lead to a redress of

all their grievances.

Towards the close of the year, General Gage sailed for Oct. 10.

England, and the command devolved on General Howe.

The Maffachusetts assembly and continental Congress both refelved, to fit out armed veffels to cruife on the American coast, for the purpose of interrupting warlike stores and supplies designed for the use of the British army. The object was at first limited, but as the prospect of accommodation vanished, it was extended to all British property affoat on the high feas. The Americans were diffident of their ability to do any thing on water in opposition to the greatest naval power in the world, but from a combination of circumstances, their first attempts were succelsful.

More than the form of the first 
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- Nov. 29. The Lee privateer, Captain Manly, took the bring Nancy, an ordnance ship from Woolwich, containing a large brass mortar, several pieces of brass cannon, a large quantity of arms and ammunition, with all manner of took utensils and machines, necessary for camps and artiller. Had Congress sent an order for supplies, they could not have made out a list of articles more suitable to their situation, than what was thus providentially thrown into their hands.
- Dec. 8. In about nine days after, three ships, with various stores for the British army, and a brig from Antigua with rum, were taken by capt. Manly. Before five days more had elapsed, several other store ships were captured. By these means the distresses of the British troops, in Boston, were increased, and supplies for the continental army were procured. Naval captures, being unexpected, were matter of triumph to the Americans, and of surprise to the Bri-The latter scarcely believed the former would oppose them by land with a regular army, but never suspected that a people, so unfurnished as they were with many things necessary for arming vessels, would presume to attempt any thing on water. A spirit of enterprize, invigorated by patriotic zeal, prompted the hardy New-Englandmen to undertake the hazardous bufinefs, and their
- Dec. 13. fuccess encouraged them to proceed. Before the close of the year, Congress determined to build five vessels of 32 guns, five of 28, and three of 24. While the Americans were fitting out armed vessels, and before they had made any captures, an event took place which would have disposed a less determined people to desist from provoking the vengeance of the British navy. This was the burning of Falmouth in the northern parts of Massachusetts. Cap. Oct. 18. tain Mowat, in the Canceaux of 16 guns, destroyed 139
  - houses, and 278 stores, and other buildings in that town.

    This spread an alarm on the coast, but produced no diposition to submit, many moved from the sea ports with their families and effects, but no solicitations were preferred for the obtaining of British protection.

In a few days after the burning of Falmouth, the old fouth meeting-house in Boston, was taken into possession by the British, and destined for a riding school, and the service of the light dragoons. These proceedings produced, in the minds of the colonists, a more determined spirit of resistance, and a more general aversion to Great-Britain.

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Ticonderoga taken, and Canada invaded.

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TT had early occurred to many, that if the fword decided the controversy between Great-Britain and her colonies, the possession of Ticonderoga would be essential to the fecurity of the latter. Situated on a promontory, formed at the junction of the waters of lake George and take Champlain, it is the key of all communication between New-York and Canada. Messrs. Deane, Wooster, Parsons, Stevens, and others of Connecticut, planned a scheme for obtaining possession of this valuable post. Having procured a loan of 1800 dollars of public money, and provided a sufficient quantity of powder and ball, they fet off for Bennington, to obtain the co-operation of Colonel Allen of that place. Two hundred and feventy men, mostly of that brave and hardy people, who are called green mountain boys, were speedily collected at Castleton, which was fixed on as the place of rendezvous. At this place Colonel Arnold, who, though attended only with a fervant, was profecuting the same object, unexpectedly joined them. He had been early chosen a captain of a volunteer company, by the inhabitants of New-Haven, among whom he refided. As foon as he received news of the Lexington battle, he marched off with his company for the vicinity of Boston, and arrived there, tho' 150 miles distant, in a few days. Immediately after his arrival he waited on the Maffachusetts committee of safety, and informed them, that there were at Ticonderoga many pieces of cannon and a great quantity of valuable stores, and that the fort was in a ruinous condition, and garrifoned only by about 40 men. They appointed him a colonel, and commissioned him to raise 400 men, and to take Ticonderoga. The leaders of the party which had previously rendezvoused at Castleton, admitted Colonel Arnold to join them, and it was agreed that Colonel Allen should be the commander in chief of the expedition, and that Col. Arnold fhould be his affiftant. They proceeded without delay, and arrived in the night at lake Champlain, oppofite to Ticonderoga. Allen and Arnold troffed over with 83 men, and landed near the garrison. They contended who should go in first, but it was at last agreed that they should both go in together. They advanced abreast, and entered the fort at the dawning of day. A centry fnapped

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his piece at one of them, and then retreated through the covered way to the parade. The Americans followed and immediately drew up. The commander surprised in his bed, was called upon to furrender the fort. He asked, by what authority? Colonel Allen replied, I demand it in the name of the great Jehovah, and of the Continental Congress." No resistance was made, and the fort with its valuable stores, and forty-eight prisoners, fell into the hands of the Americans. The boats had been fent back for the remainder of the men, but the business was done before they got over. Colonel Seth Warner was fent off with a party to take possession of Crown-point, where a serjeant and 12 men performed garrison duty. This was speedily effected. The next object, calling for the attention of the Americans, was to obtain the command of lake Champlain, but to accomplish this, it was necessary for them to get possession of a sloop of war, lying at St. John's, at the northern extremity of the lake. With the view of capturing this floop it was agreed to man and arm a schooner lying at South Bay, and that Arnold should command her, and that Allen should command some batteaux on the same expedition. A favourable wind carried the schooner a-head of the batteaux, and colonel Arnold got immediate possession of the sloop by surprise. The wind again favouring him, he returned with his prize to Ticonderoga, and rejoined Colonel Allen. The latter foon went home, and the former with a number of men agreed to remain there in garrison. In this rapid manner the possession of Ticonderoga, and the command of Lake Champlain was obtained, without any loss, by a few determined men. Intelligence of these events was in a few days communicated to Congress, which met for the first time, at ten o'clock of the same day, in the morning of They rejoiced in the which, Ticonderoga was taken. spirit of enterprise, displayed by their countrymen, but feared the charge of being aggreffors, or of doing any thing to widen the breach between Great-Britain and the colonies; for an accommodation was at that time, nearly their unanimous with .- They therefore recommended to the committees of the cities and counties of New-York and Albany, to cause the cannon and stores to be removed from Ticonderoga to the fouth end of Lake George, and to take an exact inventory of them, " in order that they might be fafely returned when the restoration of the former harmony between Great-Britain and

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the colonies, so ardently wished for by the latter, should render it prudent and confistent with the over-ruling law

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Colonel Arnold having begun his military career with a feries of fuccesses, was urged by his native impetuofity to project more extensive operations. He wrote a letter June 13. to Congress strongly urging an expedition into Canada, and offering with 2000 men to reduce the whole province. In his ardent zeal to oppose Great-Britain, he had advised the adoption of offensive war, even before Congress had organised an army or appointed a single military officer. His importunity was at last successful, as shall hereafter be related, but not till two months had elapsed, subsequent to his first proposition of conducting an expedition against Canada. Such was the encreasing fervor of the public mind in 1775, that what, in the early part of the year, was deemed violent and dangerous, was in its progress pro-

nounced both moderate and expedient.

Sir Guy Carleton, the king's governor in Canada, no fooner heard that the Americans had surprised Ticonderoga and Crown-point, and obtained the command of Lake Champlain, than he planned a scheme for their recovery. Having only a few regular troops under his command, he endeavoured to induce the Canadians and Indians to co-operate with him, but they both declined,-He established martial law that he might compel the inhabitants They declared themselves ready to defend the province, but refused to march out of it, or to commence hostilities on their neighbours. Colonel Johnston had, on the fame occasion, repeated conferences with the Indians, and endeavoured to influence them to take up the hatchet but they steadily refused. In order to gain their co-operation he invited them to feast on a Bostonian, This, in the Indian style, meant and to drink his blood. no more than to partake of a roafted ox and a pipe of wine, at a public entertainment, which was given on de-fign to influence them to co-operate with the Briefly The colonial patriots affected to understand it in its literal fense. It furnished, in their mode of explication, a convenient handle for operating on the passions of the people.

These exertions in Canada, which were principally made with a view to recover Ticonderoga, Crown-point, and the command of Lake Champlain, induced Congress to, believe that a formidable invalion of their north-

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western frontier was intended; from that quarter. The evident tendency of the Quebec act favoured this opinion. Believing it to be the fixed purpose of the British ministry to attack the united colonies on that fide, they conceived that they would be inexcusable if they neglected the proper means for warding off fo terrible a blow. They were also sensible that the only practicable plan to effect this purpose, was to make a vigorous attack upon Canada, while it was unable to refift the unexpected impression. Their fuccess at Ticonderoga and Crown-point, had already paved the way for this bold enterprize, and had broken down the fences which guarded the entrance into that province. On the other hand, they were sensible that by taking this step, they changed at once the whole nature of the war. From defensive it became offensive, and subjected them to the imputation of being the aggreffors. They were well aware that feveral who had espoused their cause in Britain, would probably be offended at this measure, and charge them with heightening the mischiefs occasioned by the dispute. They knew that the principles of refiftance, as far as they had hitherto acted upon them, were abetted by a confiderable party even in Great-Britain; and that to forfeit their good opinion, might be of great differvice. Confiderations of this kind made them weigh well the important step before they ventured upon it. They on the other hand reflected that the eloquence of the minority in parliament, and the petitions and remonstrances of the merchants in Great-Britain had produced no folid advantages in their favour; and that they had no chance of relief, but from the fmiles of Heawen on their own endeavours. The danger was preffing. War was not only inevitable, but already begun. To wait till they were attacked by a formidable force at their backs, in the very instant when their utmost exertions would be requisite, perhaps insufficient, to protect their cin and fea coast against an invasion from Britain, would be the fummit of folly. The laws of war and of nations justified the forestalling of an enemy. The colonists argued that to prevent known hostile intentions, was a matter of felf-defence; they were also fensible they had already gone fuch lengths as could only be vindicated by arms; and that if a certain degree of fuccess did not attend their refistance, they would be at the mercy of an irritated government, and their moderation in the fingle instance of Canada, would be an unavailing plea for indulgence.

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They were also encouraged to proceed, by certain information that the French inhabitants of Canada, except the noblesse and the clergy, were as much discontented with their present system of government as even the British settlers. It seemed therefore probable, that they would consider the provincials, rather as friends than as enemies. The invasion of that province was therefore determined upon, if sound practicable, and not disagreeable to the Canadians.

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Congress had committed the management of their military arrangements, in this northern department, to General Schuyler and General Montgomery. While the former remained at Albany, to attend an Indian treaty, the latter was fent forward to Ticonderoga, with a body of and New-England. troops from New-York after reaching Ticonderoga, he made a movement General Schuyler overtook down Lake Champlain. him at Cape La Motte; from thence they moved on to Isle Aux Noix. About this time General Schuyler addressed the inhabitants informing them, " that the only views of Congress were to restore to them those rights which every fubject of the British empire, of whatever religious fentiments he may be, is entitled to; and that in the execution of these trusts he had received the most pofitive orders to cherish every Canadian, and every friend to the cause of liberty, and sacredly to guard their property." The Americans, about 1000 in number, effected a Sept. 10. landing at St. John's, which being the first British post in Canada, lies only 115 miles to the northward of Ticonderoga. The British piquets were driven into the fort. The environs were then reconnoitered, and the fortifications were found to be much stronger than had been sufpected. This induced the calling of a council of war, which recommended a retreat to Isle Aux Noix, twelve miles fouth of St. John's, to throw a boom across the channel, and to erect works for its defence. Soon after this event, an extreme bad state of health induced General Schuyler to retire to Ticonderoga, and the command devolved on General Montgomery.

This enterprising officer in a few days returned to the vicinity of St. John's, and opened a battery against it. Ammunition was so scarce, that the siege could not be carried on with any prospect of speedy success. The General detached a small body of troops, to attempt the reduction of fort Chamblee, only six miles distant. Success attended this enterprize. By its surrender six tons of gunpowder were obtained, which enabled the General to prose-

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cute the fiege of St. John's with vigor. The garrison, though straitened for provisions, persevered in defending themselves with unabating fortitude. While General Montgomery was prosecuting this siege, the Governor of the province collected, at Montreal, about 800 men chiefly militia and Indians. He endeavoured to cross the river St. Lawrence, with this force, and to land at Lonquei, intending to proceed thence to attack the besiegers, but Colonel Warner with 300 green mountain boys, and a four pounder, prevented the execution of the design. The Governor's party was suffered to come near the shore, but was then fired upon with such effect as to make them retire after sustaining great loss.

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An account of this affair being communicated to the garrison in St. John's, Major Presson, the commanding officer surrendered, on receiving honourable terms of capitulation. By these it was agreed, that the garrison should march out with the honours of war, that the officers and privates should ground their arms on the plain—the officers keep their side arms, and their fire arms be reserved for them, and that the people of the garrison should retain their effects. About 500 regulars and 100 Canadian became prisoners to the provincials. They also acquired 30 pieces of cannon, seven mortars, and two howitzers, and about 800 stand of arms. Among the cannon were many brass field pieces, an article of which the American

were nearly destitute.

While the fiege of St. John's was pending, Colonel Allen, who was returning with about 80 men from a tour on which he had been fent by his General, was captured by the British near Montreal, loaded with irons, and in that condition fent to England. Major Brown had proposed that Colonel Allen should return to Lonqueil, procure canoes, and cross the river St. Lawrence, a little to the north of Montreal, while he with a force of about 200 men crossed a little to the fouth of it. The forma croffed in the night, but the latter by fome means failed on his part. Colonel Allen found himself the next morning unsupported, and exposed to immediate danger, but no vertheless concluded on maintaining his ground. General Carleton knowing his weakness, marched out against him with a superior force. The Colonel defended himself with his wonted bravery, but being deferted by feveral of his party, and having loft fifteen of his men, he

was compelled to furrender with the remainder amounting 1775.

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After the reduction of St. John's, General Montgomery proceeded towards Montreal. The few British forces there, unable to stand their ground, repaired for fafety on board the shipping in hopes of escaping down the river, but they were prevented by Colonel Easton, who was flationed at the point of Sorel river, with a number of continental troops, some cannon, and an armed gondola. General Prescot, who was on board with several officers, and about 120 privates, having no chance of escape, submitted to be prisoners on terms of capitulation. Eleven fail of veffels, with all their contents, confifting of ammunition, provision, and intrenching tools, became the property of the provincials. Governor Carleton, was about this time conveyed in a boat with muffled paddles, by a fecret way to the Three Rivers, and from thence to Quebec in a few days.

When Montreal was evacuated by the troops, the inhabitants applied to General Montgomery for a capitulation. He informed them, that as they were defenceless, they could not expect such a concession, but he engaged upon his honour to maintain the individuals and religious communities of the city, in the peaceable enjoyment of their property, and the free exercise of their religion. In all his transactions, he spoke, wrote, and acted, with dignity and propriety, and in particular treated the inhabi-

tants with liberality and politeness.

Montreal which at this time furrendered to the provincials carried on an extensive trade, and contained many of those articles, which from the operation of the resolutions of Congress, could not be imported into any of the united colonies. From these stores the American soldiers, who had hitherto suffered from the want of suitable clothing,

obtained a plentiful fupply.

General Montgomery, after leaving some troops in Montreal, and sending detachments into different parts of the province to encourage the Canadians, and to forward provisions, advanced towards the capital. His little army arrived with expedition before Quebec. Success had hitherto crowned every attempt of General Montgomery, but notwithstanding, his situation was very embarrassing.—Much to be pitied is the officer, who having been bred to arms, in the strict discipline of regular armies,

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is afterwards called to command men who carry with them the spirit of freedom into the field. The greater part of the Americans, officers as well as foldiers, having never feen any fervice, were ignorant of their duty, and but feebly impressed with the military ideas of union, sub. ordination and discipline. The army was continental in name and pay, but in no other respect. Not only the troops of different colonies conceived themselves independent dent of each other, but in some instances the different regiments of the fame colony, were backward to submit to the orders of officers in a higher grade of another line. They were also soon tired of a military life.-Novelty and the first impulse of passion had led them to camp; but the approaching cold feafon, together with the fatigues and dangers incident to war, induced a general wish to relinquish the service. Though by the terms of their inlistment, they were to be discharged in a few weeks, they could not brook an absence from their homes for that short space of time. The ideas of liberty and independence, which roused the colonists to oppose the claims of Great-Britain, operated against that implicit obedience which is necessary to a well regulated army.

Even in European states, where long habits have established submission to superiors as a primary duty of the common people, the difficulty of governing recruits, when first led to the field from civil occupations, is great; but to exercise discipline over freemen, accustomed to all only from the impulse of their own minds, required not only a knowledge of human nature, but an accommodating spirit, and a degree of patience which is rarely found among officers of regular armies. The troops

under the immediate command of General Montgomery, were from their usual habits, averse to the ideas of subordination, and had suddenly passed from domestic ease, to the numberless wants and distresses which are incident to marches through strange and desert countries. Every distinctly was increased by the short term for which they were enlisted. To secure the affections of the Canadians, it was necessary for the American General to restrain the appetites, and control the licentiousness of his soldiery,

while the appearance of military harshness was dangerous, lest their good will might be forfeited. In this choice of difficulties, the genius of Montgomery surmounted many obstacles. During his short but glori-

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re we fo ous career, he conducted himself with so much prudence, 1775. as to make it doubtful whether we ought to admire most

the goodness of the man, or the address of the General. About the same time that Canada was invaded, in the

usual route from New-York, a confiderable detachment from the American army at Cambridge, was conducted into that royal province by a new and unexpected paffage. Colonel Arnold, who fuccessfully conducted this bold undertaking, thereby acquired the name of the American Hannibal. He was detached with a thousand men, from Sept. 13. Cambridge to penetrate into Canada, by ascending the river Kennebeck, and descending by the Chaundiere to the river St. Lawrence. Great were the difficulties these troops had to encounter in marching by an unexplored route, 300 miles through an uninhabited country. In ascending the Kennebeck, they were constantly obliged to They were work upwards against an impetuous current. often compelled by cataracts or other impediments, to land and to haul their batteaux up rapid streams, and over falls of rivers. Nor was their march by land more eligible than this passage by water. They had deep swamps, thick woods, difficult mountains and craggy precipices alternatively to encounter. At some places they had to cut their way for miles together through forests so embarraffed, that their progress was only four or five miles a day. The constant fatigue caused many men to fall fick. One third of the number which fet out, were from want of necessaries obliged to return; the others proceeded with unabated fortitude and constancy. visions grew at length so scarce, that some of the men eat their dogs, cartouch boxes, breeches and shoes. When they were an hundred miles from any habitation or profpect of a supply their whole store was divided, which yielded four pints of flour for each man. After they had baked and eaten their last morfel, they had thirty miles to travel before they could expect any farther fupply. The men bore up under these complicated distresses with the greatest fortitude. They gloried in the hope of completing a march which would rival the fame of fimilar expeditions undertaken by the heroes of antiquity. Having spent thirty one days in traversing a hideous wilderness, without ever seeing any thing human, they at length reached the inhabited parts of Canada. They were there well received, and supplied with every thing necessary for their comfort. The Canadians were struck with VOL. I. amazement

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amazement when they faw this armed force emerging from the wilderness. It had never entered their conceptions that it was possible for human beings to traverse such immense wilds. The most pointed instructions had been given to this corps, to conciliate the affections of the Cana. dians. It was particularly enjoined upon them, if the fon of lord Chatham, then an officer in one of the British regiments in that province, should fall into their hands, to treat him with all possible attention, in return for the great exertions of his father in behalf of American liberty. A manifesto subscribed by general Washington, which had been fent from Cambridge with this detachment, was circulated among the inhabitants of Canada. In this they were invited to arrange themselves under the standard of general liberty; and they were informed that the American army was fent into the province, not to plunder but to protect them.

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While General Montgomery lay at Montreal, Colonel Arnold arrived at Point Levy, opposite to Quebec. Such was the consternation of the garrison and inhabitants at his unexpected appearance, that had not the river intervened, an immediate attack in the first surprise and confusion, might have been successful. The bold enterprise of one American army marching through the wilderness, at a time when fuccess was crowning every undertaking of another invading in a different direction, struck terror into the breafts of those Canadians who were unfriendly to the defigns of Congress. The embarrassments of the garrison were increased by the absence of Sir Guy Carle-That gallant officer, on hearing of Montgomery's invalion, prepared to oppose him in the extremes of the province. While he was collecting a force to attack invaders in one direction, a different corps, emerging out of the depths of an unexplored wilderness, suddenly appeared from another. In a few days after Colonel Arnold had arrived at Point Levy, he croffed the river St. Lawrence, but his chance of fucceeding by a coup de main was in that short space greatly diminished. The critical moment was past. The panic occasioned by his first appearance had abated, and folid preparations for the defence of the town were adopted. The inhabitants, both English and Canadians as soon as danger pressed, united for their common defence. Alarmed for their property, they were, at their own request, embodied for its security. The failors were taken from the shipping in the harbour, Insmszem.

harbour, and put to the batteries on shore. As Colonel Arnold had no artillery, after parading some days on the heights near Quebec, he drew off his troops, intending nothing more until the arrival of Montgomery, than to

cut off supplies from entering the garrison.

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So favourable were the prospects of the united colonies at this period, that General Montgomery fet on foot a regiment of Canadians, to be in the pay of Congress. lames Livingston, a native of New-York, who had long refided in Canada, was appointed to the command thereof, and feveral recruits were engaged for the term of The inhabitants on both fides of the twelve months. river St. Lawrence, were very friendly. Expresses in the employ of the Americans, went without moleftation, backwards and forwards, between Montreal and Quebec. Many individuals performed fignal fervices in favour of the invading army. Among a confiderable number Mr. Price stands conspicuous, who advanced 5000l. in specie for their use.

Various causes had contributed to attach the inhabitants of Canada, especially those of the inferior classes, to the interest of Congress, and to alienate their affections from the government of Great-Britain. The contest was for liberty, and there is fomething in that found, captivating to the mind of man in a state of original simplicity. It was for the colonies, and Canada was also a colony. The objects of the war were therefore supposed to be for their common advantage. The form of government lately imposed on them by act of parliament, was far from being to free as the constitutions of the other colonies, and was in many respects particularly oppressive. The common people had no representative share in enacting the laws by which they were to be governed and were subjected to the arbitrary will of persons, over whom they had no conflitutional controul. Diffinctions fo degrading were not unobserved by the native Canadians, but were more obvious to those who had known the privileges enjoyed in the neighbouring provinces. Several individuals educated in New-England and New-York, with the high ideas of liberty inspired by their free constitutions, had in the interval between the peace of Paris 1763, and the commencement of the American war, migrated into Canada. Such, fenfibly felt the difference between the governments they had left, and the arbitrary constitution imposed on P 2

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them, and both from principle and affection, earnestly persuaded the Canadians to make a common cause with the United Colonies.

Though motives of this kind induced the peafantry of the country to espouse the interest of Congress, yet fundry individuals, and fome whole orders of men, threw the weight of their influence into the opposite scale. legal privileges which the Roman Catholic clergy enjoyed, made them averfe to a change, left they should be endangered by a more intimate connection with their protestant neighbours. They used their influence in the next world, as an engine to operate on the movements of the present. They refused absolution to such of their flocks as abetted the Americans. This interdiction of the joys of Heaven, by those who were supposed to hold the keys of it, operated powerfully on the opinions and practices of the superstitious multitude. The seigneurs had also immunities unknown in the other colonies. Such is the fondness for power in every human breast, that revolutions are rarely favoured by any order of men who have reason to apprehend that their future situation will in case of a change, be less pre-eminent than before. The fagacious General Montgomery, no less a man of the world than an officer, discovered great address in accommodating himself to these clashing interests. Though he knew the part the popish clergy had acted in opposition to him, yet he conducted himself towards them as if totally ignorant of the matter; and treated them and their religion with great respect and attention. As far as he was authorifed to promife, he engaged that their ecclefiastical property should be secured, and the free exercise of their religion continued. To all he held forth the flattering idea of calling a convention of representatives, freely chosen, to institute by its own will, such a form of government as they approved. While the great mind of this illustrious man, was meditating schemes of liberty and happiness, a military force was collecting and training to oppose him, which in a short time put a period to his valuable life.

At the time the Americans were before Montreal, General Carleton, as has been releated, escaped through their hands, and got safe to Quebec. His presence was itself a garrison. The confidence reposed in his talents, inspired the men under his command to make the most determined resistance. Soon after his arrival he issued a proclamation, setting forth, "That all persons liable to do

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militia duty, and refiding in Quebec, who refused to arm 1775. in conjunction with the royal army, should in four days quit Quebec with their families, and withdraw themselves from the limits of the district by the first of December, on pain of being treated afterwards as fpies or rebels." All who were unwilling to co-operate with the British army, being thus disposed of, the remaining inhabitants, though unused to arms, became in a little time so far acquainted with them as to be very useful in defending the town. They supported fatigues and submitted to command with a patience and cheerfulness, that could not be exceeded by men familiarized to the hardships and subordination of a military life.

General Montgomery having effected at Point Aux Dec. 1. Trembles a junction with Colonel Arnold, commenced the fiege of Quebec. Upon his arrival before the town, he wrote a letter to the British Governor, recommending an immediate furrender, to prevent the dreadful confequences of a ftorm. Though the flag which conveyed this letter was fired upon, and all communication refused, General Montgomery found other means to convey a letter of the same tenor into the garrison, but the inflexible firmness of the Governor could not be moved either by threats or dangers. The Americans foon after commenced a bombardment with five small mortars, but with very little effect. In a few days General Montgomery opened a fix gun battery, at the distance of seven hundred yards from the walls, but his metal was too light to make any impression.

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The news of General Montgomery's fuccess in Canada had filled the colonies with expectations, that the conquest of Quebec would foon add fresh lustre to his already brilliant fame. He knew well the consequences of popular disappointment, and was besides of opinion that unless fomething decifive was immediately done, the benefit of his previous acquisitions would in a great degree be lost to the American cause. On both accounts, he was strongly impelled to make every exertion for fatisfying the expectations and promoting the interest of a people who had honored him with fo great a share of their confidence. The government of Great-Britain, in the extensive province of Canada, was at that time reduced to the fingle town of Quebec. The aftonished world faw peaceable colonists suddenly transformed into soldiers, and these marching through unexplored wilderneffes, and extending themselves

themselves by conquests, in the first moment after they had assumed the profession of arms. Towards the end of the year, the tide of fortune began to turn. Diffentions broke out between Colonel Arnold and some of his officers, threatening the annihilation of discipline. The continental currency had no circulation in Canada, and all the hard money furnished for the expedition, was nearly expended. Difficulties of every kind were daily increasing. The extremities of fatigue were constantly to be encountered. The American General had not a sufficient number of men to make the proper reliefs in the daily labours they underwent; and that inconfiderable number worn down with toil, was constantly exposed to the severities of a Canada winter. The period for which a great part of his men had enlifted, being on the point of expiration, he apprehended that they who were entitled to it, would infift on their discharge. On the other hand, he saw no prospect of staggering the resolution of the garrison. They were well supplied with every thing necessary for their defence, and were daily acquiring additional firmness. The extremity of winter was fast approaching. From these combined circumstances, Geral Montgomery was impressed with a conviction, that the fiege should either be raised, or brought to a summary termination. To form the place was the only feasible method of effecting the latter purpose. But this was an undertaking, in which success was but barely possible. Great minds are feldom exact calculators of danger; nor do they minutely attend to the difficulties which obstruct the attainment of their objects. Fortune, in contempt of the pride of man, has ever had an influence in the fuccess or failure of military enterprises. Some of the greatest atchievements, of that kind, have owed their fuccess to a noble contempt of common forms.

The upper part of Quebec was surrounded with very strong works, and the access from the lower town was exceffively difficult, from its almost perpendicular steepness. General Montgomery, from a native intrepidity, and an ardent thirst for glory, overlooked all these dangers, and refolved at once either to carry the place or perish in the at-Trufting much to his good fortune-confiding in the bravery of his troops, and their readiness to follow whitherfoever he should lead; and depending somewhat on the extensiveness of the works, he determined to attempt the

town by escalade.

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The garrison of Quebec at this time consisted of about 1520 men, of which 800 were militia, and 450 were feamen belonging to the King's frigates, or merchant thips in the harbour. The rest were marines, regulars, or Colonel Maclean's new raifed emigrants. The American army confifted of about 800 men. Some had been left at Montreal, and near a third of Arnold's detachment, as has been related, had returned to Cambridge.

General Montgomery having divided this little force into four detachments, ordered two feints to be made against the upper town, one by Colonel Livingston, at the head of the Canadians against St. John's gate; and the other by major Brown, against Cape Diamond, referving to himself and Colonel Arnold the two principal attacks against the lower town. At five o'clock in the morning General Montgomery advanced against the lower town. He passed the first barrier, and was just opening to attack the Dec. 31. fecond, when he was killed, together with his aid de camp, captain John M'Pherson, captain Cheesman and some others. This fo dispirited the men that Colonel Campbell, on whom the command devolved, thought proper to draw them off. In the mean time Colonel Arnold, at the head of about 356 men, passed through St. Roques, and approached near a two gun battery without being discovered. This he attacked, and though it was well defended, carried it, but with considerable loss. In this attack Colonel Arnold received a wound, which made it necessary to carry him off the field of battle. His party nevertheless continued the affault, and pushing on made themselves masters of a second barrier. These brave men sustained the force of the whole garrison for three hours, but finding themselves hemmed in, and without hopes either of fuccess, relief or retreat, they yielded to numbers and the advantageous fituation of their adversaries. The loss of the Americans in killed and wounded. was about 100 and 300 were taken prisoners. Among the flain were Captain Kendricks, Lieutenant Humphries and Lieutenant Cooper. The behaviour of the Provincial troops was fuch as might have filenced those who had reproached them for being deficient in courage. The most experienced veterans could not have exceeded the firmness they displayed in their last attack. The issue of this assault relieved the garrison of Quebec from all apprehensions for its safety. The provincials were fo much weakened, as to be

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scarcely equal to their own defence. However, Colonel Arnold had the boldness to encamp within three miles of the town, and had the address, even with his reduced numbers, to impede the conveyance of refreshments and provisions into the garrison. His fituation was extremely difficult. He was at an immense distance from those parts where effectual affiftance could be expected. On his first entrance into the province, he had experienced much kind treatment from the inhabitants. The Canadians, befides being fickle in their refolutions, are apt to be biaffed by fuccess. Their disposition to aid the Americans, became therefore daily more precarious. It was even difficult to keep the provincial troops from returning to their respective homes. Their fufferings were great. While their adversaries were comfortably housed in Quebec, they were exposed in the open air to the extreme rigour of the The feverity of a Canada winter was far beyond feafon. any thing with which they were acquainted. The fnow lay above four feet deep on a level.

This deliverance of Quebec may be confidered as a proof how much may be done by one man for the preservation of a country. It also proves that soldiers may in a short time be formed out of the mass of citizens.

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The conflict being over, the ill will which had fubfifted during the fiege, between the royal and provincial troops gave way to fentiments of humanity. The Americans, who furrendered, were treated with kindness. Ample provisions were made for their wounded, and no unneceffary feverity shewn to any. Few men have ever fallen in battle, fo much regretted by both fides, as General Montgomery. His many amiable qualities had procured him an uncommon share of private affection, and his great abilities an equal proportion of public efteem. Being a fincere lover of liberty, he had engaged in the American cause from principle, and quitted the enjoyment of an easy fortune and the highest domestic felicity, to take an active share in the fatigues and dangers of a war, instituted for the defence of the community of which he was an adopted member. His well known character was almost equally efteemed by the friends and foes of the fide which he had espoused. In America he was celebrated as a martyr to the liberties of mankind; in Great-Britain as a misguided good man, facrificing to what he supposed to be the rights of his country. His name was mentioned in parliament with fingular respect. Some of the most powerful

powerful speakers in that illustrious affembly, displayed their eloquence in sounding his praise and lamenting his fate. Those in particular who had been his fellow-soldiers in the late war, expatiated on his many virtues. The minister himself acknowledged his worth, while he reprobated the cause for which he fell. He concluded an involuntary panegyric, by saying, "Curse on his virtues, they have undone his country."

Though the invasion of Canada was finally unsuccessful, yet the advantages which the Americans gained in the months of September and October, gave fresh spirits to their army and people. The boldness of the enterprise, might have taught Great-Britain the folly of persisting in the design of subjugating America. But instead of preserving the union, and restoring the peace of the empire by repealing a few of her laws, she from mistaken dignity, resolved on a more vigorous prosecution of the war.

## C H A P. IX.

Transactions in Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and the general state of Public Affairs in the Colonies.

It has already been mentioned, that the colonists from the rifing of Congress in October 1774, and particularly after the Lexington battle, were attentive to the training their militia, and making the necessary preparations for their defence.

The effects of their arrangements for this purpose, varied with circumstances.

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Where there were no royal troops, and where ordinary prudence was observed, the public peace was indisturbed. In other cases the intemperate zeal of Governors, and the imprudent warmth of the people, anticipated the calamities of war before its proper time. Virginia, though there was not a single British soldier within its limits, was, by the indiscretion of its Governor, Lord Dunmore, involved for several months in difficulties, but little short of those to which the inhabitants of Massachusetts were subjected. His Lordship was but illy sitted to be at the helm in this tempestuous season. His passions predominated over his understanding, and precipitated him into measures injurious both to the people whom he governed,

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and to the interest of his royal master. The Virginian from the earliest stages of the controversy, had been in the foremost line of opposition to the claims of Great. Britain, but at the same time treated Lord Dunmore with the attention that was due to his station. In common with the other provinces they had taken effectual measures to prepare their militia for the purposes of defence.

Apr. 20.

While they were purfuing this object, his Lordship en. gaged a party belonging to a royal veffel in James' river, to convey some public powder from a magazine in Wil. liamfburg on board their ship. The value or quantity of the powder was inconfiderable, but the circumstance attending its removal, begat fuspicions that Lord Dunmore meant to deprive the inhabitants of the means of defence They were therefore alarmed, and affembled with arms to demand its restitution. By the interposition of the mayor and corporation of Williamsburg, extremities were prevented. Reports were foon after spread that a second attempt to rob the magazine was intended. The inhabitants again took arms, and instituted nightly patroles, with a determined resolution to protect it. The Governor was irritated at these commotions, and in the warmth of his temper threatened to fet up the royal standard,-thfranchife the negroes and arm them against their masters, This irritated, but did not intimidate. Several public meetings were held in the different counties, in all d which the removal of the powder from the magazin, and the Governor's threats, were feverely condemned Some of the gentlemen of Hanover and the neighbouring counties affembled in arms, under the conduct of Mr. Patrick Henry, and marched towards Williamsburg, with an avowed defign to obtain restitution of the porder, and to take measures for securing the public trafary. This ended in a negociation, by which it was agreed that payment for the powder, by the recent general of the colony should be accepted in lieu d restitution, and that upon the engagement of the inhabitants of Williamsburg to guard both the treating and the magazine, the armed parties should return to their habitations.

The alarm of this affair induced Lord Dunmore to fend his Lady and family on board the Fowey man of war in James' river. About the fame time his Lordship, with the affistance of a detachment of marines, fortified his palace and surrounded it with artillery. He soon after issued

iffued a proclamation, in which Mr. Henry and his affociates were charged with rebellious practices, and the present commotions were attributed to a defire in the people of changing the established form of government. Several meetings were held in the neighbouring counties, in which the conduct of Mr. Henry and of his affociates was applauded, and refolutions were adopted, that at every risque he and they should be indemnified. About this time copies of some letters from Governor Dunmore to the minister of the American department were made public. These in the opinion of the Virginians contained unfair and unjust representations of facts, and also of their temper and disposition. Many severe things were faid on both fides, and fame as usual, magnified or misrepresented whatever was said or done. One distrust begat another. Every thing tended to produce a spirit of discontent, and the fever of the public mind daily increased.

In this state of disorder the Governor convened the General Affembly. The leading motive for this unexpected measure, was to procure their approbation and acceptance of the terms of the conciliatory motion agreed to in Parliament, on the 20th of the preceding February. His Lordship introduced this to their consideration, in a long and plaulible speech. In a few days they presented their address in answer, in which, among other grounds of rejection they stated that, " the proposed plan only changed the form of oppression, without lessening its burthen;" but they referred the papers for a final determination, to Congress. For themselves they declared, "We have exhausted every mode of application which our invention could suggest, as proper and promising. We have decently remonstrated with parliament. They have added new injuries to the old. We have wearied our king with supplications; he has not deigned to answer us. We have appealed to the native honor and justice of the British nation. Their efforts in our favour have been intherto ineffectual."

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The Affembly, among their first acts, appointed a committee to inquire into the causes of the late disturbances, and particularly to examine the state of the magazine. They found most of the remaining powder buried; the musters deprived of their locks, and spring guns planted in the magazine. These discoveries irritated the people, and occasioned intemperate expressions of resent-

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May 8.

1775. ment. Lord Dunmore quitted the palace privately, and retired on board the Fowey man of war, which then lay near York-town. He left a message for the house of bur. geffes, acquainting them " that he thought it prudent to retire to a place of fafety, having reason to believe that he was in constant danger of falling a facrifice to popular fury; he nevertheless, hoped they would proceed in the great business before them; and he engaged to render the communication between him and the house as easy and as fafe as possible. He assured them that he would attend as heretofore, to the duties of his office, and that he was well disposed to restore that harmony which had been un-

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happily interrupted."

This metfage produced a joint address from the council and house of burgesses, in which they represented his Lordship's fears to be groundless, and declared their willingues to concur in any measure he would propose for the fecurity of himself and family; and concluded by intreating his return to the palace. Lord Dunmore in 2 reply, justified his apprehensions of danger from the threats which had been repeatedly thrown out. He charged the house of burgesses with countenancing the violent proceedings of the people, and with a defign to usurp the executive power and subvert the constitution. This produced a reply fraught with recrimination and defensive arguments. Every incident afforded fresh room for altercation. There was a continued intercourse by addresses, meffages and answers, between the house of burgesses and the Fowey, but little of the public business was completed. His Lordship was still acknowledged as the lawful Governor of the province, but did not think proper to set his foot on shore, in the country over which his functions were to be exercised.

At length, when the necessary bills were ready for ratification, the council and burgeffes jointly intreated the Governor's presence, to give his affent to them and finish the fession. After several messages and answers, Lord Dunmore peremptorily refused to meet the Assembly at the capital, their usual place of deliberation; but said he would be ready to receive them on the next Monday, at his present residence on board the Fowey, for the purpose of giving his affent to fuch bills as he should approve of. Upon receiving this answer, the house of burgesses passed resolutions in which they declared, that the message requiring them to attend the Governor on board a ship of

war, was a high breach of their rights and privileges- 1775. that they had reason to fear a dangerous attack was meditated against the colony, and it was therefore their opinior, that they should prepare for the preservation of their rights and liberties. After strongly professing loyalty to the King, and amity to the mother country, they broke up their fession. The royal government in Virginia, from that day ceased. Soon after, a convention July 18. of delegates was appointed to supply the place of the Affembly. As these had an unlimited confidence reposed in them, they became at once possessed of undefined discretionary powers, both legislative and executive. They exercised this authority for the tecurity of their constituents. They raised and embodied an armed force, and took other measures for putting the colony in a state of defence. They published a justification of their conduct, and fet forth the necessity of the measures they had adopted. They concluded with professions of loyalty, and declared that though they were determined at every hazard, to maintain their rights and privileges, it was also their fixed resolution to disband such forces as were raised for the defence of the colony, whenever their dangers were removed. The headstrong passions of Lord Dunmore precipitated him into farther follies. With the aid of the loyalifts, run away negroes, and some frigates that were on the station, he established a marine force. By degrees, he equipped and armed a number of veffels of different kinds and fizes, in one of which he confantly resided, except when he went on shore in a hos-This force was calculated only for detile manner. predation, and never became equal to any effential fervice. Obnoxious persons were seised and taken on board. Negroes were carried off-plantations ravaged -and houses burnt. These proceedings occasioned the fending of some detachments of the new raised provincial forces to protect the coasts. This produced a predatory war, from which neither honor nor benefit could he acquired, and in which every necessary from on shore was purchased at the risque of blood. The forces under Oft. 25. his Lordship attempted to burn Hampton; but the crews of the royal veffels employed in that business, though they had begun to cannonade it, were so annoyed by riflemen from on shore, that they were obliged to quit their station. In a few days after this repulse, a procla- Nov. 7. mation was iffued by the Governor, dated on board the

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fhip William, of Norfolk, declaring, that as the circular was at present insufficient to punish treason and traitors, martial law should take place and be executed throughout the colony; and requiring all persons capable of bearing arms, to repair to his Majesty's standard, or to be considered as traitors. He also declared all indented servants, negroes and others, appertaining to rebels, who were able and willing to bear arms, and who joined his

Majesty's forces, to be free.

Among the circumstances which induced the rulers of Great-Britain to count on an easy conquest of America, the great number of flaves had a confiderable weight. On the fea coast of five of the most southern provinces, the number of flaves exceeded that of freemen. It was supposed that the proffer of freedom would detach them from their mafter's interest, and bind them by strong ties to support the royal standard. Perhaps, under favour. able circumstances, these expectations would in some degree have been realised; but Lord Dunmore's indiscretion deprived his royal master of this resource. months had elapsed fince his Lordship first threatened is adoption. The negroes had in a great measure ceased to believe, and the inhabitants to fear. It excited less furprize, and produced less effect, than if it had been more immediate and unexpected. The country was now in a tolerable state of defence, and the force for protecting the negroes, in case they had closed with his Lordship's offer, was far short of what would have been necessary for their fecurity. The injury done the royal cause by the bare proposal of the scheme, far outweighed any advantage that refulted from it. The colonists were struck with horror, and filled with detestation of a government which was exercifed in loofening the bands of fociety, and destroying domestic security. The union and vigor which was given to their opposition, was great, while the additional force, acquired by his Lordship, was inconfiderable. It nevertheless produced some effect in Norfolk and the adjoining country, where his Lordship was joined by feveral hundreds, both whites and blacks. The Governor having once more got footing on the main, amused himself with hopes of acquiring the glory of reducing one part of the province by means of the other. The provincials had now an object against which they might direct their arms. An expedition was therefore concerted against the force which had taken post at Norfolk:

folk. To protect his adherents Lord Dunmore confructed a fort at the great bridge, on the Norfolk fide, and furnished it with artillery. The provincials also fortified themselves near to the same place, with a narrow causeway in their front. In this state both parties continued quiet for some days. The royalists commenced Dec. 9. an attack. Captain Fordyce, at the head of about 60 British grenadiers, passed the causeway, and boldly marched up to the provincial entrenchments with fixed bayonets. They were exposed without cover to the fire of the provincials in front, and enfiladed by another part of their works. The brave Captain and feveral of his The Lieutenant, with others, were taken, and all who furvived were wounded. The flaves in this engagement were more prejudicial to their British employers than to the provincials. Captain Fordyce was interred by the victors, with military honors. The English prifoners were treated with kindness, but the Americans who had joined the King's standard, experienced the refentment of their countrymen.

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The royal forces, on the enfuing night, evacuated their post at the great bridge, and Lord Dunmore shortly after abandoned Norfolk, and retired with his people on board his ships. Many of the tories, a name which was given to those who adhered to the royal interest, sought the same asylum, for themselves and moveable effects. The provincials took poffession of Norfolk, and the fleet with its new incumbrances, moved to a greater distance. people on board, cut off from all peaceable intercourse with the shore, were distressed for provisions and necesfaries of every kind. This occasioned fundry unimportant contests between the provincial forces and the armed thips and boats. At length, on the arrival of the Liverpool man of war from England, a flag was fent on shore to put the question, whether they would supply his Majesty's ships with provisions. An answer was returned in the negative. It was then determined to destroy the town. This was carried into effect, and Norfolk was re- Jan. 1. duced to ashes. The whole loss was estimated at 300,000l. sterling. The provincials, to deprive the ships of every resource of supply, destroyed the houses and plantations that were near the water, and obliged the people to move their cattle, provisions and effects, farther into the country. Lord Dunmore, with his fleet, continued for feveral months on the coast and in the rivers of Virginia.

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His unhappy followers fuffered a complication of diffred. fes. The scarcity of water and provisions, the closeness and filth of the small veffels, produced diseases which were fatal to many, especially to the negroes. Though his whole force was trifling when compared with the refources of Virginia, yet the want of fuitable armed vef. fels made its expulsion impracticable. The experience of that day evinced the inadequacy of land forces for the defence of a maritime country: and the extensive mif. chief which may be done, by even an inconfiderable marine, when unopposed in its own way. The want of a navy was both feen and felt. Some arrangements to procure one, were therefore made. Either the expectation of an attack from this quarter, or the fufferings of the crews on board, induced his Lordship in the summer 1776 to burn the least valuable of his vessels, and to send the remainder, amounting to 30 or 40 fail, to Florida, Bermuda and the West-Indies. The hopes which Lord Dunmore had entertained of fubduing Virginia by the co-operation of the negroes, terminated with this move. ment. The unhappy Africans who had engaged in it,

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While these transactions were carrying on, another scheme, in which Lord Dunmore was a party, in like manner miscarried. It was in contemplation to raise a confiderable force at the back of the colonies, particularly in Virginia and the Carolinas. One Connelly, a native of Pennsylvania, was the framer of the defign. He had gained the approbation of Lord Dunmore, and had been fent by him to General Gage at Boston, and from him he received a commission to act as Colonel Commandant. It was intended that the British garrisons at Detroit, and some other remote posts, with their artillery and ammunition, should be subservient to this defign. Connelly also hoped for the aid of the Canadians and Indians. He was authorifed to grant commissions, and to have the supreme direction of the new forces. As foon as they were in readiness, he was to penetrate through Virginia, and to meet Lord Dunmore near Alexandria, on the river Potowmac. Connelly was taken up on fulpicion, by one of the committees in Maryland, while on his way to the scene of action. The papers found in his poffession betrayed the whole. Among these was a general sketch of the plan, and a letter from Lord Dunmore to one of the Indian chiefs. He was imprifoned

foned, and the papers published. So many fortunate escapes induced a belief among serious Americans, that their cause was favoured by Heaven. The various projects which were devised and put in operation against them, pointed out the increasing necessity of union, while the havoc made on their coasts—the proffer of freedom to their slaves, and the encouragement proposed to Indians for making war on their frontier inhabitants, quick-

ened their refentment against Great-Britain.

North-Carolina was more fortunate than Virginia, The Governors of both were perhaps equally zealous for the royal interest, and the people of both equally attached to the cause of America, but the former escaped with a fmaller portion of public calamity. Several regulations were at this time adopted by most of the provinces, Councils of fafety, committees, and conventions, were common substitutes for regular government. Similar plans, for raising, arming and supporting troops, and for training the militia, were from north to fouth generally adopted. In like manner royal Governors throughout the provinces, were exerting themselves in attaching the people to the schemes of Great Britain. Governor Martin, of North-Carolina, was particularly zealous in this business. He fortified and armed his palace at Newbern, that it might answer the double purpose of a garrifor and magazine. While he was thus employed, fuch commotions were excited among the people, that he thought it expedient to retire on board a floop of war in Cape Fear river. The people on examining, found powder and various military stores which had been buried in his garden and yard. Governor Martin, though he had abandoned his usual place of residence, continued his exertions for reducing North-Carolina to obedience. He particularly addressed himself to the regulators and Highland emigrants. The former had acquired this name from their attempting to regulate the administration of ustice in the remote settlements, in a summary manner subversive of the public peace. They had suffered the consequences of opposing royal government, and from abvious principles of human nature, were disposed to apport the authority whose power to punish they had ecently experienced. The Highland emigrants had been but a short time in America, and were yet more inder the influence of European ideas than those which beir new situation was calculated to inspire. Governor VOL. I. Martin

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Martin fent commissions among these people for raising and commanding regiments; and he granted one to Mi M'Donald to act as their General. He also sent thems proclamation commanding all perfons, on their allegiance to repair to the royal standard. This was erected by G. neral M'Donald, about the middle of February. Upon the first intelligence of their assembling, Brigadier-General Moore, with some provincial troops and militia, and fome pieces of cannon, marched to oppose them. He took possession of Rock-fish Bridge and threw up some works. He had not been there many days when MDo. nald approached, and fent a letter to Moore, enclosing the Governor's proclamation, and advising him and his party to join the King's standard; and adding, that in case of refusal they must be treated as enemies. To this Moore replied, that he and his officers confidered themfelves as engaged in a cause the most glorious and bonorable in the world, the defence of mankind; and in his turn offered, that if M'Donald's party laid down their arms they should be received as friends, but, otherwife they must expect consequences similar to those which they threatened. Soon after this, General MDonald with his adherents pushed on to join Governor Martin, but Colonels Lillington and Caswell, with about 1000 militia men, took possession of Moore's Creek Bridge, which lay in their way, and raifed a small break work to secure themselves.

Feb. 27.

On the next morning the Highland emigrants attacked the militia posted at the bridge, but M'Cleod, the second in command, and some more of their officers being killed at the first onset, they sted with precipitation. General M'Donald was taken prisoner, and the whole of his party broken and dispersed. This overthrow produced consequences very injurious to the British interest. A royal steet and army was expected on the coast. A junction formed between them and the Highland emigrants in the interior country, might have made a sensible impression on the province. From an eagerness to do something the insurgents prematurely took arms, and being crushed before the arrival of proper support, their spirits were so entirely broken, that no suture effort could be expected from them.

While the war raged only in Maffachusetts, each province conducted itself as under the expectation of being next attacked. Georgia, though a majority of its inhabitants

bitants were at first against the measures, yet about the middle of this year, joined the other colonies. Having not concurred in the petitions from Congress to the King, they petitioned by themselves, and stated their rights and grievances, in firm and decided language. They also adopted the continental affortation, and fent on their deputies to Congress. levos, to chant and territ mon sal

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In South Carolina there was an eagerness to be prepared for defence, which was not furpaffed in any of the provinces. Regiments were raised-forts were builtthe militia trained, and every necessary preparation made for that purpose. Lord William Campbell, the royal Governor, endeavoured to form a party for the support of government, and was in some degree successful. Diftrufting his personal fafety on shore, about the middle of September, he took up his refidence on board an armed

veffel, then in the harbour.

The royal government still existed in name and form; but the real power which the people obeyed, was exercised by a provincial Congress, a council of fafety, and fubordinate committees. To conciliate the friendship of the Indians, the popular leaders fent a small supply of powder into their country. They who were opposed to Congress embodied, and robbed the waggons which were employed in its transportation, To inflame the minds of their adherents, they propagated a report that the powder was intended to be given to the Indians, for the purpose of masfacring the friends of royal government. The inhabitants took arms, some to support royal government, but others to support the American measures. The royalists acted feebly and were easily overpowered. They were disheartened by the superior numbers that opposed them, They every where gave way, and were obliged either to fly or feign submission, Solicitations had been made about this time for royal forces to awe the fouthern provinces, but without effect till the proper feason was over. One scheme for this purpose was frustrated by a fingular device. Private intelligence had been received of an express being sent from Sir James Wright, Governor of Georgia, to General Gage, By him the necessity of ordering a part of the royal army to the fouthward was fully stated. The express was waylaid, and compelled by two gentlemen to deliver his letters, One to General Gage was kept back, and another one forwarded in its room, The feal and hand writing were fo exactly imi-

tated that the deception was not suspected. The forged letter was received and acted upon. It stated such a degree of peace and tranquillity as induced an opinion that there was no necessity of fending royal troops to the fouth. ward. While these states were left to themselves, they had time and opportunity to prepare for extremities, and in the mean time the friends of royal government were feverally crushed. A series of disasters followed the royal cause in the year 1775. General Gage's army was cooped up in Boston, and rendered useless. In the southern states, where a small force would have made an impression, the royal Governors were unsupported. Much was done to irritate the colonists and to cement their union, but very little, either in the way of conquest or concession, to subdue their spirits or conciliate their affece trok an lige tions. da brace do consba

In this year the people of America generally took their fide. Every art was made use of by the popular leaders to attach the inhabitants to their cause; nor were the votaries of the royal interest inactive. But little impression was made by the latter, except among the uninformed. The great mais of the wealth, learning, and influence, in all the fouthern colonies, and in most of the northern, was in favour of the American cause. Some aged persons were exceptions to the contrary. Attached to ancient habits, and enjoying the fruits of their industry, they were flow in approving new measures subversive of the former, and endangering the latter. A few who had basked in the funshine of court favour, were restrained by honor, principle and interest, from forfaking the fountain of their enjoyments. Some feared the power of Britain, and others doubted the perseverance of America; but a great majority refolved to hazard every thing in preference to a tame fubmission. In the beginning of the year, the colonists were farmers, merchants and mechanics; but in its close they had affumed the profession of soldiers. So fudden a transformation of fo numerous, and fo dispersed a people, is without a parallel.

This year was also remarkable for the general termination of royal government. This was effected without any violence to its executive officers. The new system was not so much forcibly imposed or designedly adopted, as introduced through necessity, and the imperceptible agency of a common danger, operating uniformly on the mind of the public. The royal governors, for the most

part,

part, voluntarily abdicated their governments, and retired 1776. on board ships of war. They affigned for reason, that they apprehended personal danger, but this, in every infrance, was unfounded. Perhaps these representatives of royalty thought, that as they were constitutionally necesfary to the administration of justice, the horrors of anarchy would deter the people from profecuting their oppofition. If they acted from this principle, they were miftaken. Their withdrawing from the exercise of their official duties, both furnished an apology, and induced a necessity, for organising a system of government independent of royal authority. By encouraging opposition to the popular measures, they involved their friends in great diffress. The unsuccessful insurrections which they fomented, being improperly timed, and unsupported, were easily overthrown, and actually strengthened the popular government, which they meant to destroy.

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Transactions in Massachusetts, and Evacuation of Boston.

and to garren A S the year 1775 drew near to a close, the friends of Congress were embarrassed with a new difficulty. Their army was temporary, and only engaged to ferve out the year. The object for which they had taken up arms was not yet obtained. Every reason which had previously induced the provinces to embody a military force still existed, and with increasing weight. It was therefore resolved to form a new army. The same flattering hopes were indulged, that an army for the enfuing year would answer every purpose. A committee of Congress, confisting of Dr. Franklin, Mr. Lynch, and Mr. Harrison, repaired to head quarters at Cambridge, and there in conjunction with General Washington made arrangements for organising an army for the year 1776. It was prefumed that the spirit which had hitherto operated on the yeomanry of the country, would induce most of the same individuals to engage for another twelvemonth, but on experiment it was found that much of their military ardor had already evaporated. The first impulse of paffion, and the novelty of the scene, had brought many to the field, who had great objections against continuing

in the military line. They found, that to be foldiers to quired facrifices of which, when they affumed that the racter, they had no idea. So unarquainted were the bulk of the people with the mode of carrying on modern war, that many of them flew to arms with the delufive expectation of fettling the whole dispute by a few decifive and immediate engagements. Experience foon taught them that to risque life in open fighting, was but a part of the foldier's duty. Several of the inferior officers retired—the men frequently refused to enlift, unless they were allowed to chuse their officers. Others would not engage unless they were indulged with furloughs. Fifty would apply together for leave of absence; indulgence threatened less ruinous consequences than a refusal would probably have produced. On the whole, enliftments went on flowly. Though the recruits for the new army had not arrived, yet the Connecticut troops, whose time expired on the first of December, could not be persuaded to continue in service. On their way home feveral of them were stopped by the country people, and compelled to return. When every thing feemed to be exposed, by the departure of fo great a part of the late army, the militia was called on for a temporary aid. A new difficulty obstructed, as well the recruiting of the army, as the coming in of the militia. Sundry perfors infected with the small pox, were fent out of Boston and landed at Point Shirley. Such was the dread of that disease, that the British army scarcely excited equal terror. So many difficulties retarded the recruiting fervice, that on the last day of the year 1775, the whole American army amounted to no more than 9650 men. Of the remarkable events with which this important year was replete, it was not the leaft, that within mufket shot of twenty British regiments, one army was disbanded and another enlifted.

All this time the British troops at Boston were suffering the inconvenience of a blockade. From the 19th of April they were cut off from those refreshments which their situation required. The supplies from Britain did not reach the coast for a long time after they were expected. Several were taken by the American cruisers, and others were lost at sea. This was in particular the sate of many of their coal ships. The want of suel was peculiarly selt in a climate where the winter is both severe and tedious. They relieved themselves in part from

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their fufferings on this account, by the timber of houses 1776. which they pulled down and burnt. Veffels were difpatched to the West-Indies to procure provisions; but the illands were so straitened, that they could afford but little affiftance. Armed thips and transports were ordered to Georgia with an intent to procure rice, but the people of that province, with the aid of a party from South-Carolina, so effectually opposed them, that of eleven veffels, only two got off fafe with their cargoes. It was not till the stock of the garrison was nearly exhausted that the transports from England entered the port of Boston, and relieved the distresses of the garrison.

While the troops within the lines were apprehensive of fuffering from want of provisions, the troops without were equally uneafy for want of employment. Used to labour and motion on their farms, they but illy relished the inactivity and confinement of a camp life. Fiery spirits declaimed in favour of an affault. They preferred a bold spirit of enterprize, to that passive fortitude which bears up under present evils, while it waits for favourable junctures. To be in readiness for an attempt of this kind, a council of war recommended to call in 7280 mi- January litia men, from New-Hampshire or Connecticut. This 17number added to the regular army before Boston, would have made an operating force of about 17,000 men.

The provincials laboured under great inconveniencies from the want of arms and ammunition. Very early in the contest, the King of Great-Britain, by proclamation, forbad the exportation of warlike stores to the colonies. Great exertions had been made to manufacture falt petre and gun powder, but the fupply was flow and inadequate. Afecret committee of Congress had been appointed, with ample powers to lay in a stock of this necessary article. Some swift failing vessels had been dispatched to the coast of Africa to purchase what could be procured in that diftant region. A party from Charlestown forcibly took about 17000lbs. of powder from a veffel near the bar of St. Augustine. Some time after Commodore Hopkins stripped Providence, one of the Bahama islands of a quantity of artillery and stores; but the whole, procured from all these quarters, was far short of a sufficiency. In order to supply the new army before Boston with the necessary means of defence, an application was made to Maffachuletts for arms, but on examination it was found that

their public stores afforded only 200. Orders were iffued to purchase firelocks from private persons, but few had any to fell, and fewer would part with them. In the month of February, there were 2000 of the American infantry, who were destitute of arms. Powder was equal. ly scarce, and yet daily applications were made for dividends of the small quantity which was on hand, for the defence of various parts threatened with invalion. The eastern colonies presented an unusual fight. A powerful enemy safely intrenched in their first city, while a fleet was ready to transport them to any part of the coaft. A numerous body of husbandmen was resolutely bent on opposition, but without the necessary arms and ammunition for felf defence. The eyes of all were fixed on Ge. neral Washington, and from him it was unreasonably expected that he would by a bold exertion, free the town of Boston from the British troops. The dangerous fituation of public affairs led him to conceal the real fcarcity, of arms and ammunition, and with that magnanimity which is characteristical of great minds, to fuffer his character to be affailed, rather than vindicate himself by exposing his many wants. There were not wanting persons, who judging from the fuperior numbers of men in the American army, boldly afferted, that if the Commander in Chief was not defirous of prolonging his importance at the head of an army, he might by a vigorous exertion gain possession of Boston. Such suggestions were reported and believed by feveral, while they were uncontradicted by the General, who chose to risque his fame, rather than expose his army and his country,

Agreeably to the request of the council of war, about 7000 of the militia had rendezvoused in February. General Washington stated to his officers that the troops in camp, together with the reinforcements which had been called for, and were daily coming in, would amount nearly to 17,000 men-that he had not powder fufficient for a bombardment, and asked their advice whether, as reinforcements might be daily expected to the enemy, it would not be prudent before that event took place, to make an affault on the British lines. The proposition was negatived; but it was recommended to take possession of Dorchester heights. To conceal this design, and to divert the attention of the garrison, a bombardment of the town from other directions commenced, and was carried on for three days with as much brilkness as a delicient thock of powder would admit. In this first estay,

three of the mortars were broken, either from a defect in their construction, or more probably from ignorance of the proper mode of using them.

The night of the 4th of March was fixed upon for taking possession of Dorchester heights. A covering party of about 800 men led the way. These were followed by the carts with the intrenching tools, and 1200 of a working party, commanded by General Thomas. In the rear there were more than 200 carts, loaded with fafcines, and hay in bundles. While the cannon were playing in other parts, the greatest filence was kept by this working party. The active zeal of the industrious provincials completed lines of defence by the morning, which aftonished the garrison. The difference between Dorchefter heights on the evening of the 4th and the morning of the 5th, seemed to realise the tales of romance. The Admiral informed General Howe, that if the Americans kept poffession of these heights, he would not be able to keep one of his Majesty's ships in the harbour. therefore determined in a council of war, to attempt to diflodge them. An engagement was hourly expected. It was intended by General Washington, in that case, to force his way into Boston with 4000 men, who were to have embarked at the mouth of Cambridge river. militia had come forward with great alertness, each bringing three days provision, in expectation of an immediate The men were in high fpirits, and impatiently waiting for the appeal.

They were reminded that it was the 5th of March, and were called upon to avenge the death of their countrymen killed on that day. The many eminences in and near Boston, which overlooked the ground on which it was expected that the contending parties would engage, were crouded with numerous spectators. But General Howe did not intend to attack till the next day. In order to be ready for it, the transports went down in the evening towards the castle. In the night a most violent florm, and towards morning a heavy flood of rain, came on. A carnage was thus providentially prevented, that would probably have equalled, if not exceeded, the fatal 17th of June, at Bunker's-hill. In this fituation it was agreed by the British in a council of war, to evacuate the

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In a few days after, a flag came out of Boston, with a paper figned by four felect men, informing, "that they

had applied to General Robertson, who, on an application to General Howe, was authorised to assure them, that he had no intention of burning the town, unless the troops under his command were molested, during their embarkation, or at their departure, by the armed force without." When this paper was presented to General Washington, he replied, "that as it was an unauthenticated paper, and without an address, and not obligatory on General Howe, he could take no notice of it;" but at the same time intimated his good wishes for the security of the town.

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A proclamation was iffued by General Howe, ordering all woollen and linen goods to be delivered to Crean Brush, Esq. Shops were opened and stripped of their goods. A licentious plundering took place. Much was carried off, and more was wantonly destroyed. These irregularities were forbidden in orders, and the guilty threatened with death, but nevertheless every mischief which disappointed

malice could fuggeff, was committed.

March 17. The British amounting to more than 7000 men, evacuated Boston, leaving their barracks standing, and also a number of pieces of cannon spiked, four large iron sea mortars, and stores to the value of £.30,000. They demolished the castle, and knocked off the trunnions of the cannon. Various incidents caused a delay of nine days after

the evacuation, before they left Nantasket road.

This embarkation was attended with many circumstances of diffress and embarrassment. On the departure of the royal army from Bofton, a great number of the inhabitants attached to their fovereign, and afraid of public refentment, chose to abandon their country. From the great multitude about to depart, there was no possibility of procuring purchafers for their furniture, neither was there a fufficiency of velfels for its convenient transportation. Mutual jealousy subfifted between the army and navy; each charging the other as the cause of some part of their common diffress. The army was full of discontent. Reinforcements though long promised had not arrived. Both officers and foldiers thought themselves neglected. Five months had elapsed fince they had received any advice of their destination. Wants and inconveniencies increased their ill humour. Their intended voyage to Halifax subjected them to great dangers. The coast at all times hazardous, was eminently so at that tempestuous equinoctial season. They had reason to fear they would be blown off to the West-Indies, and without a

inficient flock of provisions. They were also going to a 1776. barren country. To add to their difficulties, this dangeous voyage when completed, was directly fo much out of heir way. Their bufiness lay to the southward, and they were going northward. Under all these difficulties, and with all these gloomy prospects, the fleet steered for Haifax. Contrary to appearances, the voyage thither was both short and prosperous. They remained there for some time, waiting for reinforcements and instructions from England. When the royal fleet and army departed from Boston, several ships were left behind for the protection of veffels coming from England, but the American privateers were fo alert that they nevertheless made many orizes. Some of the veffels which they captured, were aden with arms and warlike stores. Some transports, with troops on board, were also taken. These had run into the harbour, not knowing that the place was evacuated. The boats employed in the embarkation of the Britilh troops, had scarcely completed their business when General Washington, with his army, marched into Boston. He was received with marks of approbation more flattering than the pomps of a triumph. The inhabitants releafed from the severities of a garrison life, and from the various indignities to which they were subjected, hailed him as their deliverer. Reciprocal congratulations between those who had been confined within the British lines, and those who were excluded from entering them, were exchanged with an ardor which cannot be described. General Washington was honored by Congress with a vote of thanks. They also ordered a medal to be struck, with suitable devices to perpetuate the remembrance of the great event. The Maffachufetts council and house of representatives, complimented him in a joint address, in which they expressed their good wishes in the following words, "May you still go on approved by Heaven-revered by all good men, and dreaded by those tyrants, who claim their fellow men as their property." His answer was modest and proper.

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The evacuation of Boston had been previously determined upon by the British ministry, from principles of political expedience. Being resolved to carry on the war for purposes affecting all the colonies, they conceived a central position to be preserable to Boston. Reasoning of this kind had induced the adoption of the measure, but the American works on Roxbury expedited its execution.

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The abandonment of their friends, and withdrawing their forces from Boston, was the first act of a tragedy in which evacuations and retreats were the feenes which most frequently occurred, and the epilogue of which was a tout evacuation of the United States. edral that gloomy professes, the dies it yes

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## When the royal Research army Departed (are) Transactions in Ganada.

THE tide of good fortune which in the autumn of 1775 flowed in upon General Montgomery, induced Congress to reinforce the army under his command Chamblee, St. John's, and Montreal having furrendered to the Americans, a fair prospect opened of expelling the British from Canada, and of annexing that province to the united colonies. While they were in imagination anticipating these events, the army in which they confided was defeated and the general whom they adored was killed. The intelligence transmitted from General Montgomery, previous to his affault on Quebec, encouraged Congress to resolve that nine battalions should be kept up and maintained in Canada. The repulse of their army, though discouraging, did not extinguish the ardor of the Americans. It was no fooner known at head quarters in Cambridge, than General Washington convened a council of war by which it was refolved, "That as no troops could be spared from Cambridge, the colonies of Massachufetts, Connecticut and New-Hampshire, should be requested to raise three regiments and forward them to Jan. 19. Canada. Congress also resolved to forward the reinforce ments previously voted, and to raise four battalions in New-York, for the defence of that colony, and to garrifon Crown-Point, and the feveral posts to the fouthward of that fortrefs. That the army might be supplied with blankets for this winter expedition, a committee was appointed to procure from householders, such as could be fpared from their families. To obtain a supply of hard money for the use of the army in Canada, proper persons were employed to exchange paper money for specie. Such was the enthusiasm of the times that many thousand Mexican dollars were freely exchanged at par, by individuals for the paper bills of Congress. It was also resolved

Jan. 8,

1776.

to raife a corps of artillery for this service, and to take 1776. into the pay of the colonies one thousand Canadians, in addition to Colonel Livingston's regiment. Moses Hazen. a native of Maffachusetts, who had refided many years in Canada, was appointed to the command of this new corps.

Congress addressed a letter to the Canadians in which they observed, "Such is the lot of human nature, that Jan. 24. the best of causes are subject to viciffitudes; but generous fouls, enlightened and warmed with the fire of liberty, become more resolute as difficulties increase. They stated to them, " that eight battalions were raising to proceed to their province, and that if more force was necessary it should be fent. They requested them to seize with eagerness the favourable opportunity then offered to co-operate in the present glorious enterprise, and they advised them to establish affociations in their different parishes,-to elect deputies for forming a provincial affembly, and for representing them in Congress,

The cause of the Americans had received such powerful aid from many patriotic publications in their gazettes, and from the fervent exhortations of popular preachers. connecting the cause of liberty with the animating principles of religion, that it was determined to employ these two powerful instruments of revolutions-printing and preaching, to operate on the minds of the Canadians. A complete apparatus for printing, together with a printer

and a clergyman, were therefore fent into Canada,

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Congress also appointed Dr. Franklin, Mr. Chase and Mr. Carrol, the two first of whom were members of their body, and the last a respectable gentleman of the Roman Catholic perfuation to proceed to Canada with the view of gaining over the people of that colony to the cause of America, and authorised them to promise on behalf of the united colonies, that Canada should be received into their affociation on equal terms, and also that the inhabitants thereof should enjoy the free exercise of their religion, and the peaceable possession of all their ecclesiastical property,

The defire of effecting fomething decifive in Canada before the approaching spring would permit relief to ascend the river St. Lawrence, added to the enthusiasm of the day, led the Americans to encounter difficulties which in less animated times, would be reckoned unfurmountable. Arthur St. Clair who was appointed Colonel of one of the Pennsylvania regiments received his recruiting or-

ders on the 10th of January, and notwithstanding the shortness of the period, his regiment was not only raised but six companies of it had, in this extreme cold season, completed their march from Pennsylvania to Canada, a distance of seven hundred miles, and on the eleventh of April following, joined the American army before Quebec.

Though Congress and the states made great exertion to support the war in Canada, yet from the fall of Mont. gomery their interest in that colony daily declined. The reduction of Quebec was an object to which their resources were inadequate. Their unsuccessful assault on Queber made an impression both on the Canadians and Indian unfavourable to their views, A woman infected with the fmall pox had either been fent out, or voluntarily came out of Quebec, and by mixing with the American foldier propagated that scourge of the new world to the great di minution of the effective force of their army. The foldiers inoculated themselves, though their officers issued positive orders to the contrary. By the first of May fo many new troops had arrived that the American army, in name, amounted to 3000, but from the prevalence of the fmall-pox there were only 900 fit for duty. The increfing number of invalids retarded their military operations, and discouraged their friends, while the opposite party was buoyed up with the expectation that the advancing featon would foon bring them relief. To these causes of thedeclining interest of Congress, it must be added that the affections of the Canadians were alienated. They had many and well founded complaints against the Ame rican foldiers, Unrestrained by the terror of civil la and refusing obedience to a military code, the hope of impunity and the love of plunder, led many of the invading army to practices not less disgraceful to themselves, than injurious to the cause in which they had taken arms Not only the common foldiers but the officers of the Ame rican army deviated in their intercourse with the Canadians, from the maxims of found policy. Several of them having been lately taken from obscure life were giddy with their exaltation. Far from home they were unawed by those checks which commonly restrain the ferocity of man,

The reduction of Chamblee, St. John's, and Montreal, together with the exposed situation of Quebec, being known in England, measures were without delay adopted by the British ministry to introduce into Canada,

s foon as possible, a force sufficient for the double purpole of recovering what they had loft, and of profecuting offensive operations from that quarter against the revolted colonies. The van of this force made good its passage, very early in the spring, through the ice up the river St. Lawrence. The expectation of their coming had for fome time damped the hopes of the beliegers, and had induced them to think of a retreat. The day before the first of the British reinforcements arrived, that measure was resolved upon by a council of war, and arrangements were made for carrying it into execution.

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Governor Carleton was too great a proficient in the art of war, to delay feizing the advantages which the confternation of the beliegers, and the arrival of a reinforcement afforded. A small detachment of soldiers and marines from the ships which had just ascended the river St. Lawrence, being landed and joined to the garrison in Quebec, he marched out at their head to attack the Americans. his approach, he found every thing in confusion. late befiegers abandoning their artillery and military stores, had in great precipitation retreated. In this manner at the expiration of five months, the mixed fiege and blockade of Quebec was raifed, The fortitude and perseverance of the garrison reflected honor on both officers and privates.

The reputation acquired by General Carleton in his military character, for bravely and judiciously defending the province committed to his care, was exceeded by the superior applaule, merited from his exercise of the virtues of humanity and generolity, Among the numerous fick in the American hospitals, several incapable of being moved were left behind. The victorious General proved himfelf worthy of success by his treatment of these unfortunate men, he not only fed and cloathed them, but permitted them when recovered to return home. Apprehending that fear might make some conceal themselves in the woods, rather than by applying for relief, make themselves known, he removed their doubts by a proclamation, in which he en- May 10. gaged, " that as foon as their health was restored, they should have free liberty of returning to their respective provinces." This humane line of conduct was more injurious to the views of the leaders in the American councils, than the severity practised by other British commanders. The truly politic, as well as humane General Carleton, dismissed

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1776.

The small force which arrived at Quebec early in May, was followed by several British regiments; together with the Brunswic troops in such a rapid succession, that in a few weeks the whole was estimated at 13,000 men.

The Americans retreated forty-five miles before they stopped. After a short halt, they proceeded to the Sorel, at which place they threw up some slight works for their safety. They were there joined by some battalions coming to reinforce them. About this time General Thomas, the Commander in Chief in Canada was seized with the small pox and died, having forbidden his men to inoculate, he conformed to his own rule, and respect to avail himself of that precaution. On his death, the command devolved at first on General Arnold, and afterwards on General Sullivan. It soon became evident, that the Americans must abandon the whole province of Canada.

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From a defire to do fomething which might counterbalance in the minds of the Canadians, the unfavourable impression which this farther retreat would communicate, General Thomson projected an attack on the British post at the Three Rivers. This lies about half way between Quebec and Montreal, and is fo called from the vicinity of one of the branches of a large river, whose waters are discharged through three mouths into the St, Lawrence. With this view a detachment of fix hundred men was put under the command of Colonel St. Clair. At their head he advanced to the village of Nicolette. When every thing was ready for the enterprise, intelligence was re-ceived that fix transports escorted by two frigates from Quebec, had arrived and brought a large addition to the late force at the Three Rivers. This caused some new movements, and a delay till more troops could be brought forward. General Thomson then came on with a reinforcement and took the command of the whole, It was determined to make the proposed attack in four different places at the same time. One division commanded by Colonel Wayne was to gain the eaftern extremity of the town. One commanded by Colonel Maxwell was to enter from the northward about the center, and the other two divisions commanded by Colonels Sinclair and Irvine were to enter from the westward. The whole having embarked

embarked at midnight, landed at the Point du Lac, about three hours before day. At some distance from this point. there are two ways of approaching Three Rivers, one by a road that leads along the banks of the St. Lawrence. the other by a road almost parallel, but at a considerable diffance. It had been determined to advance on the laft. Intelligence was brought to General Thomson, soon after his landing that a party of 3 or 400 men were posted at three miles distance. The troops were instantly put in motion to dislodge them. The intelligence proved to be false but it had carried the detachment, some distance berond the point, where the roads separated. To have returned, would have confumed time that could not be spared as the day was fast approaching. It was therefore resolved to proceed in a diagonal direction towards the road they had left. After being much retarded by very difficult grounds, they arrived at a morals which feemed impaffable. Here the day broke, when they were fix miles from their object. General Thomson suspecting the fidelity of his guides, put them under arrest—reversed the order of his march, and again reached the road by the river. He had advanced but a small distance before he was. fired upon by two armed veffels. All expectation of fucceeding by furprise, was now at an end. It was therefore inflantly determined to make an open attack. The fun was rifing. The drums were ordered to beat, and the troops moved on with the greatest alacrity. Having advanced three miles farther, the ships of war began to fire on them. The American officer who led the advance, fruck into a road on the left, which also led to the town. and was covered from the fire of the ships. This last road was circuitous and led through a vast tract of woodland at that feason almost impassable. He nevertheless entered the wood, and the rest of the detachment followed. After incredible labour, and wading a rivulet breast deep, they gained the open country north of the village. A party of the British were soon discovered about a mile to the left of the Americans, and between them and the town. Colonel Wayne, ardent for action immediately attacked them. The onfet was gallant and vigorous, but the contest was unequal. The Americans were foon repulsed and forced to retreat. In the beginning of the action General Thomson left the main body of his corps to join that which was engaged. The woods were so thick, that it was dif-Micr wandering Ar fome times they al LIOV

ficult for any person in motion, after losing fight of an object to recover it. The General therefore never found his way back. The fituation of Colonel St. Clair, the next in command became embarraffing. In his opinion are treat was necessary, but not knowing the precise situation of his fuperior officer, and every moment expecting his return, he declined giving orders for that purpose. Atlast when the British were discovered on the river road, ad. vancing in a direction to gain the rear of the Americans. Colonel St. Clair in the absence of General Thomson, ordered a retreat. This was made by treading back their steps through the same dismal swamp by which they had advanced. The British marched directly for the Point du Lac with the expectation of fecuring the American battaux. On their approach Major Wood, in whose care they had been left, retired with them to the Sorel. At the Point du Lac, the British halted and took a very advantageous position. As soon as it was discovered that the Americans had retired, a party of the British pursued them. When the former arrived near the place of their embarkation, they found a large party of their enemies posted in their front, at the same time that another was only three quarters of a mile in their rear. Here was a new and trying dilemma, and but little time left for con-There was an immediate necessity, either to lay down their arms or attempt by a fudden march to turn the party in front and get into the country beyond it. The last was thought practicable. Colonel St. Clair having some knowledge of the country from his having ferved in it in the preceding war, gave them a route by the Acadian village where the river de Loups is fordable. They had not advanced far when Colonel St. Clair found himself unable to proceed from a wound, occasioned by a root which had penetrated through his shoe. His men offered to carry him, but this generous propofal was declined. He and two or three officers, who having been worn down with fatigue, remained behind with him, found an afylum under cover of a large tree which had been blown up by the roots. They had not been long in this fituation when they heard a firing from the British in almost all directions. They nevertheless lay still, and in the night stole off from the midst of surrounding for. They were now preffed with the importunate cravings of hunger, for they were entering on the third day without food. After wandering for some time, they accidentially found

found some peasants, who entertained them with great hospitality. In a few days they joined the army at Sorel, and had the satisfaction to find that the greatest part of the detachment had safe arrived before them. In their way through the country, although they might in almost every step of it have been made prisoners, and had reason to fear that the inhabitants from the prospect of reward, would have been tempted to take them, yet they met with neither injury nor insult. General Thomson was not so fortunate. After having lost the troops and falling in with Colonel Irwine, and some other officers, they wandered the whole night in thick swamps, without being able to find their way out. Failing in their attempts to gain the river, they had taken refuge in a house, and were there made prisoners.

The British forces having arrived, and a considerable body of them having rendezvoused at the Three Rivers, a serious pursuit of the American army commenced. Had Sir Guy Carleton taken no pains to cut off their retreat, and at once attacked their post, or rather their fortified camp at Sorel, it would probably have fallen into his hands; but either the bold, though unsuccessful attack, at the Three Rives had taught him to respect them, or he wished to reduce them without bloodshed. In the pursuit he made three divisions of his army, and arranged them so as to embrace the whole American encampment, and to command it in every part, the retreat was delayed so long that the Americans evacuated Sorel, only about two hours before one di-

vision of the British made its appearance.

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While the Americans were retreating, they were daily affailed by the remonstrances of the inhabitants of Canada, who had either joined or befriended them. Great numbers of Canadians had taken a decided part in their favour, rendered them essential services, and thereby incurred the heavy penalties annexed to the crime of supporting rebellion. These, though Congress had assured them but a few months before "that they would never abandon them to the sury of their common enemies" were from the necessity of the case lest exposed to the resentment of their provincial rulers. Several of them with tears in their eyes, expostulated with the retreating army, and bewailing their hard sate prayed for support. The only relief the Americans could offer was an assurance of continued protection, if they re-

who had wives, children and immoveable effects. They generally concluded, that it was the least of two evils to call themselves on the mercy of that government, against which

they had offended.

The diffresses of the retreating army were great. The Eritish were close on their rear and threatening them with destruction. The unfurnished state of the colonies in point of ordnance, imposed a necessity of preserving their cannon. The men were obliged to drag their loaded batteauxs up the rapids by mere strength, and when they were to the middle in water. The retreating army was also incumbered with great numbers labouring under the small-pox, and other diseases. Two regiments, at one time, had not a single man in health. Another had only six, and a sourth only forty, and two more were in nearly the same condition.

To retreat in face of an enemy is at all times hazardous; but on this occasion it was attended with an unusual proportion of embarrassiments. General Sullivan, who conducted the retreat, nevertheless acted with so much judgment and propriety, that the baggage and public stores were faved, and the numerous sick brought off. The American army reached Crown-Point on the first of July, and at that

place made their first stand.

A short time before the Americans evacuated the province of Canada, General Arnold convened the merchants of Montreal, and proposed to them to surnish a quantity of specified articles, for the use of the army in the service of Congress. While they were deliberating on the subject, he placed centinels at their shop doors, and made such arrangements, that what was at first only a request, operated as a command. A great quantity of goods were taken on pretence that they were wanted for the use of the American army, but in their number were many articles only serviceable to women, and to persons in civil life. His nephew soon after opened a store in Albany, and publicly disposed of goods which had been procured at Montreal.

The possession of Canada so eminently savoured the plans of desence adopted by Congress, that the province was evacuated with great reluctance. The Americans were not only mortisted at the disappointment of their savourite scheme, of annexing it as a sourteenth link in the chain of their consederacy, but apprehended the most serious conse

quences

quences from the ascending of the British power in that 1776. quarter. Anxious to preserve a footing there, they had persevered for a long time in stemming the tide of unfavourable events, and and and and or

General Gates was about this time appointed to com- Jun. 17. mand in Canada, but on coming to the knowledge of the late events in that province, he concluded to stop short within the limits of New-York, The scene was henceforth reverfed. Instead of meditating the recommencement of offensive operations, that army which had lately excited to much terror in Canada, was called upon to be prepared for

repelling an invalion threatened from that province The attention of the Americans being exclusively fixed on plans of defence, their general officers commanding in the northern department, were convened to deliberate on the place and means most suitable for that purpose. To form a judgment on this subject, a recollection of the events of the late war, between France and England, was of advantage. The fame ground was to be fought over, and the same posts to be again contended for. On the confines of Lake George and Lake Champlain two inland feas, which stretch almost from the sources of Hudson's River to St. Lawrence, are fituated the famous posts of Ticonderoga and Crown-Point. These are of primary necessity to any power which contends for the possession of the adjacent country, for they afford the most convenient stand either for its annoyance or defence. In the opinion of some American officers, Crown-Point to which the army on the evacuation of Canada had retreated, was the most proper place for erecting works of defence, but it was otherwise determined, by the council convened, on this occasion. It was also by their advice resolved, to move lower down, and to make the principal work on the strong ground east of Ticonderoga, and especially by every means to endeavour to maintain a naval superiority in Lake Champlain. conformity to these resolutions General Gates with about 12,000 men, which collected in the course of the summer, was fixed in command of Ticonderoga, and a fleet was . constructed at Skenesborough. This was carried on with so much rapidity, that in a short time there were affoat, in Lake Champlain, one floop, three schooners, and fix gondolas, carrying in the whole 58 guns, 86 swivels, and 440 Aug. 22. men. Six other vessels were also nearly ready for launching in addition to this, confilted of only fifted

mierior force.

1776. at the same time. The fleet were put under the command of General Arnold, and he was instructed by Ge. neral Gates, to proceed beyond Crown-Point, down Lake Champlain, to the Split Rock; but most peremptorily restrained from advancing any farther, as security against an apprehended invasion was the ultimate end of the armament.

> The expulsion of the American invaders from Canada. was but a part of the British designs in that quarter. They urged the pursuit no farther than St. John's, but indulged the hope of being foon in a condition for pass. ing the lakes, and penetrating through the country to Albany, fo as to form a communication with New-York. The objects they had in view were great, and the obfiacles in the way of their accomplishment equally so. Before they could advance with any prospect of success, a fleet superior to that of the Americans on the lakes, was to be constructed. The materials of some large vessels were, for this purpose brought from England, but their transportation, and the labour necessary to put them together required both time and patience. The spirit of the British commanders rose in proportion to the difficulties which were to be encountered. Nevertheless it was so late as the month of October, before their fleet was prepared to face the American naval force, on Lake Champlain. The former confifted of the ship Inflexible, mounting 18 twelve pounders, which was fo expeditiously constructed, that she failed from St. John's 28 days after laying her keel. One schooner mounting 14 and another 12 fix pounders. A flat bottomed radeau carrying fix 24 and fix twelve pounders, befides howitzers, and a gondola with feven nine pounders. There were also twenty smaller vessels with brass field pieces, from 9 to 24 pounders, or with howitzers. Some long boats were furnished in the same manner. An equal number of large boats acted as tenders. Besides these vessels of war, there was a valt number destined for the transportation of the army, its stores, artillery, baggage, and provisions. The whole was put under the command of Captain Pringle. The naval force of the Americans, from the deficiency of means, was far short of what was brought against them. Their principal armed veffel was a schooner, which mounted only 12 fix and four pounders, and their whole fleet in addition to this, confifted of only fifteen veffels of inferior force.

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No one step could be taken towards accomplishing the defigns of the British, on the northern frontiers of New-York, till they had the command of Lake Champlain. With this view their fleet proceeded up the lake, and engaged the Americans. The wind was fo unfavourable to the British, that their ship Inflexible, and some other veffel of force, could not be brought to action. leffened the inequality between the contending fleets fo much, that the principal damage sustained by the Americans, was the loss of a schooner and gondola. At the approach of night the action was discontinued. The vanquished took the advantage, which the darkness afforded to make their escape. This was effected by General Arnold, with great judgment and ability. By the next morning the whole fleet under his command was out of fight. The British pursued with all the fail they could croud. The wind having become more favourable, they overtook the Americans, and brought them to action near Crown-Point. A fmart engagement enfued and was well fupported on both fides for about two hours. Some of the American veffels which were most a head escaped to Ticonderoga. Two gallies and five gondolas remained and refifted an unequal force, with a spirit approaching to defperation. One of the gallies struck and was taken, neral Arnold, though he knew that to escape was imposfible, and to refift unavailing, yet instead of furrendering, determined that his people should not become prisoners, nor his veffels a re-inforcement to the British. This spirited refolution was executed with a judgment, equal to the boldness, with which it had been adopted. He ran the Congress galley on board of which he was, together with the five gondolas on thore, in fuch a position, as enabled him to land his men and blow up the veffels. In the execution of this perilous enterprise, he paid a romantic attention to a point of honor. He did not quit his own galley till she was in flames, lest the British should board her, and strike his flag. The result of this action, though unfavourable to the Americans, raised the reputation of General Arnold, higher than ever. In addition to the fame of a brave foldier, he acquired that of an able sea officer. The American naval force being nearly destroyed, the British had undisputed possession of Lake Champlain.

On this event a few continental troops which had been

at Crown-Point, retired to their main body at Ticonde-

Oct. 11.

1776.

Oct. 13.

from which they had retreated, and was there foon joined by his army. He fent out several reconnoitering parties, and at one time pushed forward a strong detachment on both sides of the lake, which approached near to Ticonderoga. Some British vessels appeared at the same time, within cannon shot of the American works, at that place. It is probable he had it in contemplation, is circumstances favoured to reduce the post, and that the apparent strength of the works, restrained him from making the attempt, and induced his return to Canada.

Such was the termination of the northern campaign in 1776. Though after the furrender of Montreal, evacuations, defeats, and retreats, had almost uninterruptedly been the portion of the Americans, yet with respect to the great object of defence on the one side, and of conquest on the other, a whole campaign was gained to them, and

loft to their adverfaries. Independ birs , entersing all

The British had cleared Canada of its invaders, and defiroyed the American sleet on the lakes, yet from impediments thrown in their way, they failed in their ulterior designs. The delays contrived by General Gates, retarded the British for so great a part of the summer, that by the time they had reached Ticonderoga, their retreat on account of the approaching winter, became immediately necessary. On the part of the Americans, some men, and a sew armed vessels were lost, but time was gained, their army saved, and the frontier of the adjacent states secured from a projected invasion. On the part of the British, the object of a campaign, in which 13,000 men were employed, and near a million of money expended, was rendered in a great measure abortive.

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The Proceedings of Parliament, against the Colonies, 1775

—6. Operations in South-Carolina, New-York, and
New-Jersey.

THE operations carried on against the united colonies, in the year 1775, were adapted to cases of eriminal combination among subjects not in arms. The military arrangements for that year, were therefore made on the idea of a trisling addition to a peace establishment.

It was either not known, that a majority of the Ameri- 1776. cans had determined to refift the power of Great-Britain, rather than fubmit to the late coercive laws, or it was not believed that they had foirit fufficient to act in conformity to that determination. The propenfity in human nature. to believe that to be true which is wished to be so, had deceived the royal fervants in America, and the British ministry in England, fo far as to induce their general belief, that a determined spirit on the part of government, and a few thousand troops to support that determination, would eafily compose the troubles in America. Their military operations in the year 1775, were therefore calculated on the small scale of strengthening the civil power, and not on the large one of refifting an organised army. Though it had been declared by parliament in February, 1775, that a rebellion existed in Massachusetts, vet it was not believed that the colonists would dare to abet their opposition by an armed force. The resistance made by the militia at Lexington, the confequent military arrangements adopted, first by Massachusetts, and afterwards by Congress, together with the defence of Bunker's-full, all conspired to prove that the Americans were far from being contemptible adversaries. The nation finding itself, by a fatal progression of the unhappy dispute, involved in a civil war, was roused to recollection. Though several corporate bodies, and fundry distinguished individuals in Great-Britain, were opposed to coercive measures, yet there was a majority for proceeding. The pride of the nation was interested in humbling the colonists, who had dared to relist the power which had lately triumphed over the combined force of France and Spain. The prospect of freeing their own estates from a part of the heavy taxes charged thereon, induced a number of the landed gentlemen in Great-Britain to support the They conceived the coercion of the cosame measures. lonies to be the most direct mode of securing their contribution towards finking the national debt. Influenced by these opinions, such not only justified the adoption of rigorous measures, but cheerfully consented to present additional taxes with the same spirit which induces litigants in private life to advance money for forwarding a lawfuit, from the termination of which great profits are expected. Lord North, the Prime Minister of England, finding himself supported by so many powerful interests, was enful party in the city of London, and triumphed over the East-India Company. The submission of the colonies was only wanting to complete the glory of his administration. Previous success emboldened him to attempt the arduous business. He stattered himself that the accomplishment of it would not only restore peace to the empire, but give a brilliancy to his name, far exceeding that of any of his pre-

deceffors.

Such was the temper of a great part of the nation, and fuch the ambitious views of its Prime Minister, when the parliament was convened, on the 24th of October 1775. In the speech from the throne great complaints were made of the leaders in the colonies, who were faid by their mifrepresentatives to have infused into the minds of the deluded multitude, opinions repugnant to their conftitutional subordination, and afterwards to have proceeded to the commencement of hostilities, and the usurpation of the whole powers of government. His Majesty also charg. ed his subjects in America with "meaning only to amuse by vague expressions of attachment to the Parent State, while they were preparing for a general revolt;" And he farther afferted " that the rebellious war now levied by them was become more general, and manifestly carried on for the purpose of establishing an independent empire, and that it was become the part of wisdom, and in its effects, of clemency to put a speedy end to these disorders by the most decisive exertions."

Information was also given, that the most friendly offers of foreign affiftance had been received, and that his Majesty's electoral troops were sent to the garrison of Gibraltar and Port Mahon, in order that a large number of the established forces of the kingdom might be applied to the maintenance of its authority." The feverity of these affertions was mitigated by a declaration, " that when the unhappy and deluded multitude against whom this force should be directed, would become sensible of their error, his Majesty would be "ready to receive the missed with tenderness and mercy," " and that to prevent inconveniencies, he should give authority to certain persons on the spot, to grant general or particular pardons and indemnities to such as should be disposed to return to their allegiance." The fentiments expressed in this speech and the heavy charges therein laid against the colonists were re-echoed in addresses to the King from both houses of parliament, but not without a spirited protest

1775

protest in the House of Lords. In this, nineteen dissenting members afferted the American war to be " unjust and impolitic in its principles, and fatal in its confequences." They also declared, that they could not confent to an address, " which might deceive his Majesty and the public into a belief of the confidence of their house in the present ministers, who had disgraced Parliament, deceived the nation-lost the colonies, and involved them in a civil war against their clearest interests, and upon the most unjustifiable grounds wantonly spilling the

blood of thousands of their fellow subjects."

The fanction of Parliament being obtained for a vigorous profecution of the American war, estimates for the public service, were agreed to on the idea of operating against the colonies as an hostile armed foreign power. To this end it was voted to employ 28,000 feamen, and 55,000 land forces, and the fanction of authority was not long after given to measures for engaging foreign mercenaries. No ministry had in any preceding war exerted themselves more to prosecute military operations against alien enemies, than the present to make the ensuing campaign decifive of the dispute between the mother country and the colonies. One legislative act was still wanting to give full efficacy to the intended profecution of hostilities. This was brought into Parliament in a bill Nov. 20. interdicting all trade and intercourse with the thirteen united colonies. By it all property of Americans, whether of ships or goods, on the high seas, or in harbour, was declared " to be forfeited to the captors, being the officers and crews of his Majesty's ships of war." It farther enacted " that the masters, crews and other persons found on board captured American veffels, should be entered on board his Majesty's vessels of war, and there considered to be in his Majesty's service to all intents and purposes, as if they had entered of their own accord." This bill also authorised the crown to appoint commissioners, who over and above granting pardons to individuals were empowered to "enquire into general and particular grievances, and to determine whether any colony or part of a colony was returned to that state of obedience, which might entitle it to be received within the King's peace and protection." In that case upon a declaration from the commissioners " the restrictions of the proposed law were to ceafe."

It was faid in favour of this bill, that as the Ame-

ricans were already in a flate of war, it became necessary that hostilities should be carried on against them, as was usual against alien enemies. That the more vigorously, and extensively military operations were profecuted, the fooner would peace and order be restored.—That as the commissioners went out with the sword in one hand, and terms of conciliation in the other, it was in the power of the colonists to prevent the infliction of any real or appa-

rent feverities, in the proposed statute."
In opposition to it, it was said, "that treating the Americans as a foreign nation, was chalking out the way for their independence." One member observed, that as the indifcriminate rapine of property authorised by the bill, would oblige the colonists to coalesce as one man, its title ought to be " A bill for carrying more effectually into execution the resolves of Congress." The clause for vesting the property of the seizures in the captors, was reprobated as tending to extinguish in the breasts of seamen the principles of patriotifm—of national pride and glory, and to substitute in their room habits of cruelty, of piracy and robbery. But of all parts of this bill none was so severely condemned as that clause by which perfons taken on board the American veffels, were indiscriminately compelled to ferve as common failors in British ships of war. This was said to be "a refinement of ty-ranny worse than death." It was also said, "That no man could be despoiled of his goods as a foreign enemy, and at the same time obliged to serve as a citizen, and that compelling captives to bear arms against their families, kindred, friends and country-and after being plundered themselves to become accomplices in plundering their brethren, was unexampled, except among pirates, the outlaws and enemies of human fociety." these high charges the ministry replied, "that the mea-fure was an act of grace and favor, for" said they, "the crews of American veffels, instead of being put to death, the legal punishment of their demerits, as traitors and rebels, are by this law to be rated on the King's books, and treated as if they were on the fame footing with a great body of his most useful and faithful subjects." It was also said, " that their pay and emoluments in the service of their lawful fovereign would be a compensation for all scruples that might arise from the supposed violation of their principles."

In the progress of the debates on this bill, Lord Mansfield

field declared, " that the questions of original right and 1776. wrong were no longer to be considered—that they were engaged in a war, and must use their utmost efforts to obtain the ends proposed by it, that they must either fight or be purfued, and that the justice of the cause must give way to their present fituation." Perhaps no speech in or out of Parliament operated more extensively on the irritated

minds of the colonists than this one.

The great abilities and profound legal knowledge of Lord Mansfield were both known and admired in America. That this illustrious oracle of law should declare from the feat of legislation, that the justice of the cause was no longer to be regarded, excited the aftonishment, and cemented the union of the colonists. " Great-Britain, faid they, has commenced war against us for maintaining our conflitutional liberties, and her lawgivers now declare they must proceed without any retrospect to the merits of the original ground of dispute. Our peace and happiness must be facrificed to British honor and consistency, in their continuing to profecute an unjust invasion of our rights." A number of Lords, as usual, entered a spirited protest against the bill, but it was carried by a Dec. 21, great marity in both houses of Parliament, and soon after received the royal affent.

This law arrived in the colonies in March 1776. The effects refulting from it were fuch as had been predicted by its oppofers. It not only united the colonies in refifting Great-Britain, but produced a favourable opinion of independence in the minds of thousands, who previously reprobated that measure. It was considered from New-Hampshire to Georgia, as a legal discharge from allegiance to their native fovereign. What was wanting to produce a decided majority of the party for breaking off all connection with Great-Britain, was speedily obtained from the irritation excited by the hiring of foreign troops to fight against the colonists. This measure was nearly coincident with the ratification of the prohibitory law just mentioned, and intelligence of both arrived in the colonies about the

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The treaties which had been lately concluded with the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, the Duke of Brunswic, and the hereditary Prince of Heffe-Caffel for hiring their troops to the king of Great-Britain, to be employed in the American fervice, being laid before the house of Com- Feb. 29, mons, a motion was made thereon for referring them to

1775.

the committee of fupply. This occasioned a very inte resting debate on the propriety of employing foreign troops against the Americans. The measure was supported on the necessity of profecuting the war, and the impracticability of raising a sufficient number of domes. tic levies. It was also urged " that foreign troops inspired with the military maxims, and ideas of implicit fubmiffion, would be less apt to be biaffed by that falls lenity, which native foldiers might indulge, at the expence of national interest." It was faid, " Are we to fit still and fuffer an unprovoked rebellion to terminate in the formation of an independent hostile empire?" "Are we to fuffer our colonies, the object of the great national expence, and of two bloody wars to be loft for ever to us, and given away to strangers from a scruple of employing foreign troops to preserve our just rights, over colonies for which we have paid fo dear a purchase? As the Americans by refusing the obedience and taxes of subjects, deny themselves to be a part of the British empire, and make themselves foreigners, they cannot complain that foreigners are employed against them." On the other fide the measure was severely condemned. The necessity of the war was denied, and the natio was represented as disgraced by applying to the petty princes of Germany, for fuccours against her own rebellious subjects. The tendency of the example to induce the Americans to form alliances with foreign powers, was ftrongly urged. It was faid, " hitherto the colonists have ventured to commit themselves singly in this arduous contest, without having recourse to foreign aid, but it is not to be doubted, that in future they will think themselves sully justified both by our example, and the laws of felf-prefervation, to engage foreigners to affift them in opposing those mercenaries, whom we are about to transport for Nor is it doubtful that in case of their destruction. their application, European powers of a rank far superior to that of those petty princes, to whom we have fo abjectly fued for aid, will confider themselves to be equally entitled to interfere in the quarrel between us and our colonies."

The supposition of the Americans receiving aid from France or Spain, was on this and several other occasions ridiculed, on the idea that these powers would not dare to set to their own colonies the dangerous example of encouraging those of Great-Britain in opposing their sovereign.

fovereign. It was also supposed, that they would be influenced by considerations of future danger to their American possessions, from the establishment of an independent

empire in their vicinity.

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In this session of Parliament between the 26th of October, 1775, and the 23d of May, 1776, the ultimate plan for reducing the colonies was completely fixed. The Americans were declared out of the royal protection, and 16,000 foreign mercenaries, employed by national authority, to effect their subjugation. These measures induced Congress in the following summer to declare themselves independent, and to seek for foreign aid: Events which shall be hereafter more fully explained.

Parliamentary fanction for carrying on the war against the colonists, as against alien enemies being obtained, it became necessary to fix on a commander of the royal forces to be employed on this occasion. This as a matter of right was, in the first instance, offered to General Oglethorpe, as being the first on the list of General officers. To the furprise of the minister, that respectable veteran readily accepted the command, on condition of his being properly supported. A numerous well appointed army and a powerful fleet were promifed him, to which he replied, " I will undertake the business without a man or a ship of war, provided you will authorise me to assure the colonists on my arrival among them, that you will do them justice." He added farther, I know the people of America well, and am fatisfied, that his Majesty has not in any part of his dominions, more obedient, or more loyal fubjects. You may fecure their obedience by doing them justice, but you will never subdue them by force of arms." These opinions so favourable to the Americans, proved General Oglethorpe to be an improper person for the purpose intended by the British ministry. He was therefore passed over, and the command given to Sir William Howe.

It was resolved to open the campaign, with such a powerful force as "would look down all opposition, and effectuate submission without bloodshed," and to direct its operations to the accomplishment of three objects. The first was the relief of Quebec, and the recovery of Canada, which also included a subsequent invasion of the north-western frontiers of the adjacent provinces. The second was a strong impression on some of the southern colonies. The third and principal, was to take possession of New-York, with a force sufficiently powerful to keep

possession

possession of Hudson's-River, and form a line of communication with the royal army in Canada, or to over-

run the adjacent country.

The partial fuccess of the first part of this plan, has been in the preceding chapter explained. The execution of the second part was committed to General Clinton, and Sir Peter Parker. The former with a small force having called at New-York, and also visited in Virginia Lord Dunmore, the late royal Governor of that colony, and finding that nothing could be done at either place, proceeded to Cape Fear River. At that place he issued a proclamation from on board the Pallas transport, offering free pardon to all such as should lay down their arms, excepting Cornelius Hasnett, and Robert Howe, but the recent defeat of the regulators and Highlanders, restrained even their friends from paying any attention to this act of grace.

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At Cape Fear a junction was formed between Sir Henry Clinton, and Sir Peter Parker, the latter of whom had failed with his fquadron directly from Europe. They concluded to attempt the reduction of Charlestown as being, of all places within the line of their instructions, the object at which they could strike with the greatest prospect of advantage. They had 2,800 land forces, which they hoped, with the co-operation of their shipping,

would be fully fufficient.

For some months past every exertion had been made to put the colony of South-Carolina, and especially its capital Charlestown, in a respectable posture of desence. In subserviency to this view, works had been erected on Sullivan's island, which is situated so near the channel leading up to the town, as to be a convenient post for

annoying veffels approaching it.

July 28. Sir Peter Parker attacked the fort on that island, with two fifty gun ships, the Bristol and Experiment, sour frigates, the Active, Acteon, Solebay and Syren, each of 28 guns. The Sphynx of 2e guns, the Friendship armed vessel of 22 guns, Ranger sloop, and Thunder bomb, each of 8 guns. On the fort were mounted 26 cannon; 26, 18 and 9 pounders. The attack commenced between ten and eleven in the forenoon, and was continued for upwards of ten hours. The garrison consisting of 375 regulars and a few militia, under the command of Colonel Moultrie, made 2 most gallant defence. They fired deliberately, for the most part took

alm and feldom miffed their object. The thips were torn almost to pieces, and the killed and wounded on board exceeded 200 men. The loss of the garrison was only ten men killed, and 22 wounded. The fort being built of palmetto, was little damaged. The shot which struck it were ineffectually buried in its foft wood. General Clinton had some time before the engagement, landed with a number of troops on Long-Island, and it was expected that he would have co-operated with Sir Peter Parker, by croffing over the narrow passage, which divides the two islands, and attacking the fort in its unfinished rear; but the exfreme danger to which he must unavoidably have exposed his men, induced him to decline the perilous attempt. Colonel Thomson with 7 or 800 men was stationed at the east end of Sullivan's island, to oppose their croffing. No serious attempt was made to land either from the fleet, or the detachment commanded by Sir Henry Clinton. firing ceafed in the evening, and foon after the thips flipped their cables. Before morning they had retired about two miles from the illand. Within a few days more the froops re-embarked and the whole failed from New-York. The thanks of Congress were given to General Lee, who had been fent on by Congress to take the command in Carolina, and also to Colonels Moultrie and Thomson, for their good conduct on this memorable day. In compliment to the commanding officer the fort from that time was call-Fort Moultrie.

During the engagement the inhabitants flood with arms in their hands at their respective posts, prepared to receive the enemy wherever they might land. Impressed with high ideas of British power and bravery, they were apprehenfive that the fort would be either filenced or passed, and that they should be called to immediate action. They were cantoned in the various landing places near Charleftown, and their resolution was fixed to meet the invaders at the water's edge, and dispute every inch of ground,

truffing the event to Heaven.

By the repulse of this armament the fouthern states obtained a respite from the calamities of war for two years and a half. The defeat the British met with at Charlestown, feemed in some measure to counterbalance the unfavourable impression made, by their subsequent successes, to the northward. Throughout the whole fummer, and till the close of the year, Congress had little else than the victory on Sullivan's island, to confole them under the VOL. I. various

June 12.

various evacuations, retreats, and defeats, to which, a shall hereafter be related, their armies were obliged to submit in every other part of the union. The event of the expedition contributed greatly to establish the cause which it was intended to overset. In opposition to the bold affertions of some, and the desponding sears of others, experience proved that America might effectually resist a British sleet and army. Those, who from interested motives had abetted the royal government, ashamed of their opposition to the struggles of an infant people for their dearest rights, retired into obscurity.

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The effects of this victory, in animating the Americans, were much greater than could be warranted, by the circumstances of the action. As it was the first attack made by the British navy, its unsuccessful issue inspired a considence which a more exact knowledge of military calculations would have corrected. The circumstance of its happening in the early part of the war, and in one of the weaker provinces, were happily instrumental in dispelling the gloom which overshadowed the minds of many of the colonists, on hearing of the powerful sleets and numerous armies which

were coming against them.

The command of the force which was designed to operate against New-York in this campaign, was given to Admiral Lord Howe, and his brother Sir William, officers who, as well from their personal characters, as the known bravery of their family, stood high in the confidence of the British nation. To this service was allotted a very powerful army, consisting of about 30,000 men. This force was far superior to any thing that America had heretofore seen. The troops were amply provided with artillery, military stores, and warlike materials of every kind, and were supported by a numerous sleet. The Admiral and General, in addition to their military powers, were appointed commissioners for restoring peace to the colonies.

General Howe having in vain waited two months at Halifax for his brother, and the expected reinforcements from England, impatient of farther delays, failed from that harbour, with the force which he had previously commanded in Boston, and directing his course towards June 10. New-York, arrived in the latter end of June, off Sandy-

Hook. Admiral Lord Howe, with part of the reinforcement from England, arrived at Halifax, soon after his brother's departure. Without dropping anchor he followed, and soon after joined him near Staten-Island.

The British General, on his approach, found every part of New-York island, and the most exposed parts of Long-Island fortified and well defended by artillery. About fifty British transports anchored near Staten-Island, which had not been to much the object of attention. The inhabitants thereof, either from fear, policy, or affection, expressed great joy on the arrival of the royal forces. General Howe was there met by Tryon, late Governor of the province, and by feveral of the loyalifts, who had taken refuge with him in an armed veffel. He was also joined by about fixty persons from New-Jersey, and 200 of the inhabitants of Staten-Island were embodied as a royal militia. From these appearances, great hopes were indulged that as foon as the army was in a condition to penetrate into the country, and to protect the loyalists, fuch numbers would flock to their standard as would facilitate the attainment of the objects of the campaign.

On the fourth day after the British transports appeared off Sandy-Hook. Congress, though fully informed of the numbers and appointment of the force about to be employed against the colonies, ratified their famous declaration of independence. This was publicly read to the American army, and received by them with unfeigned acclamations of joy. Though it was well known, that Great-Britain had employed a force of 55,000 men, to war upon the new-formed states, and that the continental army was not near equal to half that number, and only engaged for a few months, and that Congress was without any affurance of foreign aid, yet both the American officers and privates gave every evidence of their hearty approbation of the decree which fevered the colonies from Great-Britain, and submitted to the decision of the fword, whether they should be free states, or conquered provinces. Now, faid they, "we know the ground on which we stand. Now we are a nation. No more shall the opprobrious term of rebel, with any appearance of justice, be applied to us. Should the fortune of war throw us into the hands of our enemies, we may expect the treatment of prisoners, and not the punishment of rebels. The prize for which we contend is of fuch magnitude that we may freely risque our lives to obtain it."

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It had early occurred to General Washington, that the possession of New-York, would be with the British a favourite object. Its central situation and contiguity to the

ocean, enabled them to carry with facility the war to any part of the sea-coast. The possession of it was rendered still more valuable by the ease with which it could be maintained. Surrounded on all sides by water, it was defensible by a small number of British ships, against adversaries whose whole navy consisted only of a few significant. Hudson's river, being navigable for ships of the largest size to a great distance, afforded an opportunity of severing the eastern from the more southern states, and of preventing almost any communication between them.

From these well known advantages, it was presumed by the Americans, that the British would make great exertions to effect the reduction of New-York. Lee, while the British were yet in possession of the capital of Maffachusetts had been detached from Cambridge. to put Long-Island and New-York into a posture of defence. As the departure of the British from Boston became more certain, the probability of their instantly going to New-York, increased the necessity of collecting a force for its fafety. It had been therefore agreed in a council of war, that five regiments, together with a rifle battalion should march without delay to New-York, and that the states of New-York and New Jersey should be request ed to furnish the former two thousand, and the latter one thousand men for its immediate defence. General Washington foon followed, and early in April fixed his head quarters in that city. A new distribution of the American army took place. Part was left in Massachusetts. Be tween two and three thousand were ordered to Canada: but the greater part rendezvoused at New-York.

Experience had taught the Americans the difficulty of attacking an army, after it had effected a lodgment. They therefore made strenuous exertions to prevent the British from enjoying the advantages in New-York, which had resulted from their having been permitted to land and fortify themselves in Boston. The sudden commencement of hostilities in Massachusetts, together with the previous undisturbed landing of the royal army, allowed no time for deliberating on a system of war. A change of circumstances indicated the propriety of fixing on a plan for conducting the defence of the new formed states. On this occasion General Washington, after much thought,

determined on a war of posts. This mode of conducting

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military operations gave confidence to the Americans, and befides, it both retarded and alarmed their adversarios. The foldiers in the American army were new levies, and had not yet learned to fland uncovered, before the instruments of death. Habituating them to the found of fire arms. while they were sheltered from danger, was one step towards infairing them with a portion of mechanical courage. The British remembered Bunker's-hill, and had no small reverence for even flight fortifications, when defended by frees men. From views of this kind, works were erected in and about New-York, on Long-Island, and the heights of Haerlem. These, besides batteries, were field redoubts. formed of earth with a parapet and ditch. The former were fometimes fraised, and the latter palifadoed, but they were in no inftance formed to fuftain a fiege. Slight as they were, the campaign was nearly wafted away before they were fo far reduced, as to permit the royal army to penetrate into the country.

The war having taken a more important turn than in the preceding year had been foreseen, Congress at the opening of the campaign, found themselves destitute of a force sufficient for their defence. They therefore in June determined on a plan to reinforce their continental army by bringing into the field, a new species of troops, that would be more permanent than the common militia, and yet more eafily raifed than regulars. With this view they instituted a flying camp, to confift of an intermediate corps, between regular soldiers and militia. Ten thousand men were called for from the states of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware, to be in constant service to the first day of the ensuing December. Congress at the same time called for 13,800 of the common militia from Massachusetts, Connec- June 3. ticut, New-York, and New-Jersey. The men for forming the flying camp were generally procured, but there were great deficiencies of the militia, and many of those who obeyed their country's call, so far as to turn out, manifefted a reluctance to submit to the necessary discipline of

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The difficulty of providing the troops with arms while before Boston, was exceeded by the superior difficulty of supplying them in their new position. By the returns of the garrison at Fort Montgomery in the Highlands in April, it appeared that there were 208 privates, and only forty-one muskets fit for use. In the garrison at Fort

Constitution.

Constitution, there were 136 men, and only 68 muskets fit for use. Flints were also much wanted. Lead would have been equally deficient, had not a supply for the must quetry been obtained by stripping dwelling houses.

The uncertainty of the place, where the British would commence their operations, adding much to the embar. raffment of General Washington. Not only each colony, but each fea-port town, supposed itself to be the object of the British, and was ardent in its supplications, to the Commander in Chief for his peculiar attention. The people of Massachusetts were strongly impressed with an idea, that the evacuation of Boston was only a feint, and that the British army would soon return. They were for that reason very defirous, that the continental troops should not be withdrawn from their state. The inhabitants of Rhode-Island urged in a long petition, that their maritime fituation exposed them to uncommon danger, while their great exertions in fitting out armed veffels, had deprived them of many of their citizens. They therefore prayed for a body of continental foldiers, to be stationed for their constant and peculiar defence. So various were the applications for troops, fo numerous the calls for arms, that a decided conduct became necessary to prevent the feeble American force, and the deficient stock of public arms from being divided and subdivided, so as to be unequal to the

proper defence of any one place.

In this crifis of particular danger, the people of New-York acted with spirit. Though they knew they were to receive the first impression of the British army, yet their convention refolved, "that all the perfons refiding within the state of New-York, and claiming protection from its laws, owed it allegiance, and that any person owing it allegiance and levying war against the state, or being an adherent to the King of Great-Britain, should be deemed guilty of treason and suffer death." They also resolved that one fourth of the militia of West-Chester, Duches and Orange counties, should be forthwith drawn out for the defence of the liberties, property, wives and children, of the good people of the state, to be continued in service till the last day of December," and, " that as the inhabitants of King's County, had determined not to oppose the enemy, a committee should be appointed to enquire into the authenticity of these reports, and to disarm and secure the disaffected. To remove or destroy the stock of grain, and if necessary to lay the whole country waste." The

The two royal commissioners, Admiral and General Howe, thought proper, before they commenced their military operations, to try what might be done in their civil capacity, towards effecting a re-union between Great-Britain and the colonies. It was one of the first acts of Lord Howe, to send on shore a circular letter to several of the royal governors in America, informing them of the late act of parliament, " for reftoring peace to the colonies, and granting pardon to fuch as should deserve mercy, and defiring them to publish a declaration which accompanied the same. In this he informed the colonists of the power with which his brother and he were entrufted " of granting general or particular pardons to all those who though they had deviated from their allegiance, were willing to return to their duty," and of declaring "any colony, province, county or town, port, district or place to be in the peace of his Majesty." Congress, impressed with a belief, that the proposals of the commissioners, instead of disuniting the people, would have a contrary effect, ordered them to be speedily published in the several American news-papers, Had a redress of grievances been at this late hour offered, though the honour of the flates was involved in supporting their late declaration of independence, yet the love of peace, and the bias of great numbers to their Parent State, would in all probability have made a powerful party for rescinding the act of separation, and for re-uniting with Great-Britain. when it appeared that the power of the royal commissioners was little more than to grant pardons, Congress appealed to the good sense of the people, for the necessity of adhering to the act of independence, The resolution for publishing the circular letter, and the declaration of the royal commissioners, assigned a reason thereof to be "that the good people of the United States may be informed of what nature are the commissioners, and what the terms, with expectation of which the infidious court of Great Britain had endeavoured to amuse and disarm them, and that the few who still remain suspended by a hope, founded either in the justice or moderation of their late King may now at length be convinced that the valour alone of their country is to fave its liberties."

About the same time flags were sent ashore by Lord Howe, with a letter directed to George Washington, Esq.

which he refused to receive as not being addressed to him with the title due to his rank. In his letter to Congress on this subject he wrote as follows, I would not on any occasion facrifice essentials to punctilio, but in this instance I deemed it a duty to my country and appointment, to inside on that respect, which in any other than a public view, I would willingly have waved." Congress applauded his conduct in a public resolution, and at the same time directed that no letter or message should be received on any occasion whatever, from the enemy, by the Commander in Chief, or others the commanders of the American army, but such as were directed to them in the characters they see

verally fustained."

Some time after, Adjutant-General Patterson was sent to New-York, by General Howe, with a letter addressed to George Washington, &c. &c. &c. On an interview the Adjutant-General, after expressing his high esteem for the person and character of the American General, and declaring that it was not intended to derogate from the respect due to his rank, expressed his hopes that the et ceteras would remove the impediments to their correspondence. General Washington replied, " That a letter directed to any person in a public character, should have some description of it, otherwise it would appear a mere private letter. it was true the et ceteras implied every thing, but they also implied any thing, and that he should therefore decline the receiving any letter directed to him as a private person, when it related to his public station. A long conference enfued, in which the Adjutant-General observed, that at the commissioners were armed with great powers, and would be very happy in effecting an accommodation." He received for answer, "that from what appeared, their powers were only to grant pardon, that they who had committed no fault, wanted no pardon." Soon after this interview, a letter from Howe, respecting prisoners, which was properly addressed to Washington was received.

While the British, by their manisestoes and declarations, were endeavouring to separate those who preserved a reconciliation with Great-Britain from those who were the friends of independence, Congress, by a similar policy, was attempting to detach the foreigners, who had come with the royal troops, from the service of his Britannic Majesty. Before hostilities had commenced, the following resolution was adopted and circulated among those

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on whom it was intended to operate. " Refolved, that Aug. 14. thefe flates will receive all fuch foreigners who shall leave the armies of his Britannic Majesty in America, and shall chuse to become members of any of these states, and they shall be protected in the free exercise of their respective religions, and be invested with the rights, privileges and immunities of natives, as established by the laws of these fates, and moreover, that this Congress will provide for every fuch person, fifty acres of unappropriated lands in fome of these states, to be held by him and his heirs, as absolute property,"

The numbers which were prepared to oppose the Brifish, when they should disembark, made them for some time cautious of proceeding to their projected land operations, but the superiority of their navy enabled them to

go by water, whitherfoever they pleafed.

A British forty-gun thip, with some smaller vessels, July 12. failed up North-River, without receiving any damage of consequence, though fired upon from the batteries of New-York, Paules-Hook, Red-Bank, and Governor's Island. An attempt was made, not long after, with two fire-ships, to destroy the British vessels in the North-River, but without effecting any thing more than the burning of a tender. They were also attacked with row-gallies, but to little purpose. After some time the Phoenix and Role men of war, came down the river, and joined the fleet.-Every effort of the Americans from their batteries on land, as well as their exertions on the water, proved ineffectual. The British ships passed with less loss than was generally expected, but nevertheless the damage they received was such as deterred them from frequently repeating the experiment. In two or three instances they afcended the North-River, and in one or two the East-River, but those which failed up the former, speedily returned, and by their return, a free communication was opened through the upper part of the state.

The American army in and near New-York amounted to 17,225 men. These were mostly new troops, and were divided in many fmall and unconnected posts, fome of which were fifteen miles removed from others, The British force before New-York was increasing by frequent fuccessive arrivals from Halifax, South-Carolina, Florida, the West-Indies and Europe. But so many unforeseen delays had taken place, that the month of August was far advanced, before they were in a condition to open the

campaign.

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When all things were ready, the British commander resolved to make their first attempt on Long-Island. This was preserved to New-York, as it abounded with those

supplies which their forces required,

The British landed without opposition, between two fmall towns, Utrecht and Gravefend. The American works protected a fmall peninfula having Wallabout-Bay to the left, and stretching over to Red-Hook on the right, the East-River being in their rear, General Sullivan, with a strong force, was encamped within these works at Brooklyne. From the east-fide of the narrows runs a ridge of hills covered with thick wood, about five or fix miles in length, which terminates near Jamaica.-There were three paffes through thefe hills, one near the narrows, a second on the Flatbush road, and a third on the Bedford road, and they are all defensible. These were the only roads which could be paffed from the fouth fide of the hills to the American lines, except a road which led round the easterly end of the hills to Jamaica. The Americans had 800 men on each of these roads, and Colonel Miles was placed with his battalion of riflemen, to guard the road from the fouth of the hills to Jamaica, and to watch the motions of the British.

Aug. 26. Flatbush in the evening. In the following night the greater part of the British army, commanded by General Clinton, marched to gain the road leading round the easterly end of the hills to Jamaica, and to turn the lest of the Americans. He arrived about two hours before day, within half a mile of this road. One of his parties sell in with a patrol of American officers, and took them all prisoners, which prevented the early transmission of intelligence. Upon the first appearance of day General Clinton advanced, and took possession of the heights over which the road passed. General Grant, with the lest wing, advanced along the coast by the west road, near the narrows; but this was intended chiefly as a feint.

The guard which was stationed at this road, sled without making any resistance. A few of them were afterwards rallied, and Lord Stirling advanced with 1500 men, and took possession of a hill, about two miles from the American camp, and in front of General Grant.

Aug. 27. An attack was made very early in the morning by the Hessians from Flatbush, under General de Heister, and by

General Grant on the coast, and was well supported for a considerable time by both sides. The Americans who opposed General de Heister were first informed of the approach of General Clinton, who had come round on their left. They immediately began to retreat to their camp, but were intercepted by the right wing under General Clinton, who got into the rear of their left, and attacked them with his light infantry and dragoons, while rewere met by the Hessians. They were driven back till they were met by the Hessians. They were thus alternately chased and intercepted, between General de Heister and General Clinton. Some of their regiments nevertheless found their way to the camp. The Americans under Lord Stirling, confifting of Colonel Miles' two battalions, Col. Atlee's, Col. Smallwood's, and Colonel Hatche's regiments, who were engaged with General Grant, fought with great resolution for about fix hours. They were uninformed of the movements made by General Clinton, till some of the troops under his command, had traversed the whole extent of country in their rear. Their retreat was thus intercepted, but feveral notwithstanding, broke through and got into the woods. Many threw themfelves into the marsh, some were drowned, and others perished in the mud, but a considerable number escaped by this way to their lines.

The King's troops displayed great valour throughout the whole day. The variety of the ground occasioned a succession of small engagements, pursuits and slaughter, which lasted for many hours. British discipline in every instance, triumphed over the native valour of raw troops, who had never been in action, and whose officers were un-

acquainted with the stratagems of war.

The loss of the British and Hessians was about 450. The killed, wounded and prisoners of the Americans, including those who were drowned or perished in the woods or mud, considerably exceeded a thousand. Among the prisoners of the latter were two of their general officers, Sullivan and Lord Stirling. Three Colonels, 4 Lieutenant Colonels, 3 Majors, 18 Captains, 43 Lieutenants, and 11 Ensigns. Smallwood's regiment, the officers of which were young men of the best families in the state of Maryland, sustained a loss of 250 men. The British after their victory were so impetuous, that it was with difficulty, they could be restrained from attacking the American lines.

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In the time of, and subsequent to the engagement General Washington drew over to Long-Island, the greatest part of his army. After he had collected his principal force there, it was his wish and hope, that Sir William Howe would attempt to fform the works on the island. These though insufficient to stand a regular siege, were strong enough to resist a coup de main. The remembrance of Bunker's-hill, and a desire to spare his men, reffrained the British General from making an assault. On the contrary, he made demonstrations of proceeding by fiege, and broke ground within three hundred yards to the left, at Putnam's redoubt. Though General Washington wished for an assult, yet being cer-Aug. 30 tish batteries should be fully opened, he called a council of war, to confult on the measures proper to be taken, It was then determined that the objects in view were in no degree proportioned to the dangers to which, by a continuation on the island, they would be exposed. Conformably to this opinion, dispositions were made for an immediate retreat. This commenced foon after it was dark from two points, the upper and lower ferries, on East-River. General McDougal regulated the embark. ation at one, and Col. Knox at the other. The intention of evacuating the island, had been so prudently concealed from the Americans, that they knew not whither they were going, but supposed to attack the enemy. The field artillery, tents, baggage, and about 9000 men were conveyed to the city of New-York over East-River, more than a mile wide, in less than 13 hours, and without the knowledge of the British, though not six hundred yards diffant. Providence, in a remarkable manner favoured the retreating army. For some time after the Americans began to cross, the state of the tide and a Arong north-east wind made it impossible for them to make use of their sail-boats, and their whole number of row-beats was insufficient for completing the business, in the course of the night. But about eleven o'clock, the wind died away, and foon after fprung up at fouth-east, and blew fresh, which rendered the fail-boats of use, and at the same time made the passage from the island to the city, direct, easy and expeditious. Towards morning an extreme thick fog came up, which hovered over Long-Island, and by concealing the Americans, enabled them to complete their retreat without interruption, though

the day had begun to dawn some time before it was finished. By a mistake in the transmission of orders, the American lines were evacuated for about three quarters of an hour, before the last embarkation took place, but the British, though so near, that their working parties could be diffinctly heard, being inveloped in the fog knew nothing of the matter. The lines were repossessed and held till fix o'clock in the morning. When every thing except some heavy cannon was removed, General Mifflin, who commanded the rear-guard, left the lines, and under the cover of the fog got off fafe. In about half an hour the fog cleared away, and the British entered the works which had been just relinquished. Had the wind not shifted, the half of the American army could not have croffed, and even as it was, if the fog had not concealed their rear, it must have been discovered, and could hardly have escaped. General Sullivan, who was taken prisoner on Long-Island, was immediately sent on parole, with the following verbal message from Lord Howe to Congress, " that though he could not at present treat with them in that character, yet he was very defirous of having a conference with some of the members, whom he would confider as private gentlemen; that he with his brother the General, had full powers to compromise the dispute between Great-Britain and America, upon terms advantageous to both-that he wished a compact might be fettled, at a time when no decifive blow was flruck, and neither party could fay it was compelled to enter into fuch agreement. That were they disposed to treat, many things which they had not yet asked, might and ought to be granted, and that if upon conference they found any probable ground of accommodation, the authority of Congress would be afterwards acknowledged to render the treaty complete." Three days after this message was received, General Sullivan was requested to inform Lord Howe, " that Congress being the reprefentatives of the free and independent states of America, they cannot with propriety fend any of their members to confer with his Lordship in their private characters, but that ever defirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they will fend a committee of their body, to know whether he has any authority to treat with persons authorised by Congress, for that purpose, on behalf of America, and what that authority is; and to hear such propolitions as he shall think fit to make respecting the same."

They elected Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge their committee, for this purpose. In a few days they met Lord Howe on Staten-Island, and were received with great politeness. On their return they made a report of their conference, which they fummed up by faying, " It did not appear to your committee that his Lordship's commission contained any other authority than that expressed in the act of Parliament-namely, that of granting pardons, with fuch exceptions as the commitfioners shall think proper to make, and of declaring Ame. rica, or any part of it, to be in the King's peace, on fub. mission: for as to the power of enquiring into the state of America, which his Lordship mentioned to us, and of conferring and confulting with any persons the commisfioners might think proper, and reprefenting the refult of fuch conversation to the ministry, who, provided the colonies would fubject themselves, might after all, or might not, at their pleafure, make any alterations in the former instructions to Governors, or propose in Parliament, any amendment of the acts complained of, we apprehended any expectation from the effect of fuch a power, would have been too uncertain and precarious, to be relied on by America, had the still continued in her state of dependence." Lord Howe had ended the conference on his part, by expressing his regard for America, and the extreme pain he would fuffer in being obliged to distress those whom he so much regarded. Dr. Franklin thanked him for his regards, and affured him, that the Americans would shew their gratitude, by endeavouring to lessen as much as possible, all pain he might feel on their account, by exerting their utmost abilities, in taking good care of themselves."

The committee in every respect maintained the dignity of Congress. Their conduct and sentiments were such as became their character. The friends to independence rejoiced that nothing resulted from this interview, that might disunite the people. Congress, trusting to the good sense of their countrymen, ordered the whole to be printed for their information. All the states would have then rejoiced at less beneficial terms than they obtained about seven years after. But Great-Britain counted on the certainty of their absolute conquest, or unconditional submission. Her offers therefore comported so little with the teelings of America, that they neither caused demur nor

difunion, among the new formed states.

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The unfuccessful termination of the action on the 27th, led to confequences more feriously alarming to the Americans, than the lofs of their men. Their army was univerfally dispirited. The militia ran off by companies, Their example infected the regular regiments. The loofe footing on which the militia came to camp, made it hazardous to exercise over them that discipline, without which, an army is a mob. To reftrain one part of an army, while another claimed and exercised the right of doing as they pleased, was no less impracticable than absurd.

A council of war recommended to act on the defenfive, and not to rifque the army for the fake of New-York. To retreat, subjected the Commander in chief to Sept. 7. reflections painful to bear, and yet impolitic to refute. To frand his ground, and by fuffering himfelf to be furrounded, to hazard the fate of America on one decifive engagement, was contrary to every rational plan of defending the wide extended states committed to his care. A middle line between abandoning and defending was therefore for a short time adopted. The public stores were moved to Dobb's-ferry, about 26 miles from New-York. 12000 men were ordered to the northern extremity of New-York island, and 4500 to remain for the defence of the city, while the remainder occupied the intermediate space, with orders, either to support the city or Kingsbridge, as exigencies might require. Before the British landed, it was impossible to tell what place would be first attacked. This made it necessary to erect works for the defence of a variety of places, as well as of New-York. Tho' every thing was abandoned when the crifis came that either the city must be relinquished, or the army risqued for its defence, yet from the delays occasioned by the redoubts and other works, which had been erected on the idea of making the defence of the states a war of posts, a whole campaign was loft to the British, and faved to the Americans. The year began with hopes, that Great-Britain would recede from her demands, and therefore every plan of defence was on a temporary system. The declaration of independence, which the violence of Great-Britain forced the colonies to adopt in July, though neither foreseen nor intended at the commencement of the year, pointed out the necessity of organising an army, on new terms, correspondent to the enlarged objects for which they had refolved to contend. Congress accordingly de-Sept. 16termined to raise 88 battalions, to serve during the war.

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Under these circumstances to wear away the campilen with as little misfortune as possible, and thereby to gin time for raifing a permanent army against the next year, was to the Americans a matter of the last importance Though the Commander in chief abandoned those works which had engroffed much time and attention, yet the advantage resulting from the delays they occasioned, for overbalanced the expence incurred by their erection,

The fame short-fighted politicians who had before cenfured General Washington for his cautious conduct, in not forming the British lines at Boston, renewed their clamors against him, for adopting this evacuating and retreating fystem. Supported by a consciousness of his own integrity, and by a full conviction that these measures were best calculated for securing the independence of America, he for the good of his country, voluntarily subjected his

fame to be overshadowed by a temporary cloud.

General Howe having prepared every thing for a de-Sept. 15. fcent on New-York island, began to land his men under cover of ships of war, between Kepps'-bay and Turtle-bay. A breast-work had been erected in the vicinity, and a party flationed in it to oppose the British, in case of their attempting to land. But on the first appearance of danger, they ran off in confusion. The Commander in chief came up, and in vain attempted to rally them. Though the British in fight, did not exceed fixty, he could not either by example, intreaty, or authority, prevail on a superior force to stand their ground, and face that inconsiderable number. Such dastardly conduct raised a tempest in the usually tranquil mind of General Washington. Having embarked in the American cause from the purest principles, he viewed with infinite concern this shameful behaviou, as threatening ruin to his country. He recolleded the many declarations of Congress, of the army, and of the inhabitants, preferring liberty to life, and death to difhonour, and contrasted them with their present scandalous flight. His foul was harrowed up with apprehensions that his country would be conquered—her army difgraced, and her liberties destroyed. He anticipated, in imagination, that the Americans would appear to polterity in the light of high founding boafters, who bluftered when danger was at a distance, but shrunk at the shadow of opposition. Extensive confiscations and numerous attainders presented themselves in full view to his agitated mind. He faw, in imagination, new formed flates, with the

the means of defence in their hands, and the glorious prospects of liberty before them, levelled to the dust, and fich constitutions imposed on them as were likely to crush the rigour of the human mind, while the unfuccessful iffue of the present struggle would for ages to come, deter posterity from the bold design of afferting their rights. Impressed with these ideas he hazarded his person for fome confiderable time in rear of his own men, and in front of the enemy with his horse's head towards the latter, as if in expectation, that by an honorable death he might escape the infamy he dreaded from the dastardly conduct of troops on whom he could place no dependence. His aids and the confidential friends around his person, by indirect violence, compelled him to retire. In confequence of their address and importunity, a life was faved for public fervice, which otherwise from a sense of honor, and a gust of passion, seemed to be devoted to almost cercalled, in which Contrat Lee gave little continue in bolles

On the day after this shameful flight of part of the American army, a skirmish took place between two battalions of light infantry and highlanders commanded by Brigadier Leslie, and some detachments from the American army, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Knowlton of Connecticut, and Major Leitch of Virginia. -The Colonel was killed and the Major badly wounded. Their men behaved with great bravery, and fairly beat their adverfaries from the field. Most of these were the same men, who had difgraced themselves the day before, by running away.-Struck with a fense of shame for their late milbehaviour, they had offered themselves as volunteers, and requested the Commander in Chief to give them an opportunity to retrieve their honor. Their good conduct, at this fecond engagement, proved an antidote to the pollon of their example on the preceding day. It demonstrated that the Americans only wanted resolution and good officers to be on a footing with the British, and inspired them with hopes that a little more experience would enable them to affume, not only the name and garb, but the fpirit and firmness of soldiers.

The Americans having evacuated the city of New-York, a brigade of the British army marched into it. They had been but a few days in possession, when a dreadful fire, most probably occasioned by the disorderly conduct of some British sailors, who had been permitted to regale themselves on shore, broke out, and consumed Vol. I.

1776. about a thousand houses. Dry weather, and a brisk wind spread the flames to such an extent, that had it not been for the great exertions of the troops and failors, the whole city must have shared the same fate. After the Americans had evacuated New-York, they retired to the north end of the island, on which that city is erected. In about four weeks General Howe began to execute a plan for cutting off General Washington's communication with the eaftern states, and enclosing him fo as to compel a general engagement on the island. With this view, the greater part of the royal army passed through Hellgate, entered Oct. 12. the found, and landed on Frog's-neck, in West-Chester

county. Two days after they made this movement, Ge-Oct. 14. neral Lee arrived from his late fuccessful command to the fouthward. He found that there was a prevailing dif-

position among the officers in the American army for remaining on New-York island. A council of war by called, in which General Lee gave fuch convincing reasons for quitting it, that they refolved immediately to withdraw the bulk of the army. He also pressed the expediency of evacuating Fort Washington, but in this he was opposed by General Greene, who argued that the possesfion of that post would divert a large body of the enemy, from joining their main force, and in conjunction with Fort Lee, would be of great use in covering the transportation of provisions and stores up the North River, for the service of the American troops. He added farther, that the garrifon could be brought off at any time,

> vour of Fort Washington, and near 3000 men were affigned for its defence.

Oct. 18. The royal army, after a halt of fix days, at Frog'sneck, advanced near to New-Rochelle. On their march they sustained a considerable loss by a party of Ameri-Oct. 21. cans, whom General Lee posted behind a wall. After three days, General Howe moved the right and centre of his army two miles to the northward of New-Rochelle, on the road to the White Plains, and there he received a

large reinforcement.

General Washington, while retreating from New-York island, was careful to make a front towards the British, from East-Chester, almost to White Plains, in order to secure the march of those who were behind, and

by boats from the Jersey side of the river. His opinion prevailed. Though the fystem of evacuating and retreating was in general adopted, an exception was made in fa-

to defend the removal of the fick, the cannon and stores of his army. In this manner his troops made a line of fmall detached and intrenched camps, on the feveral heights and strong grounds, from Valentine's hill, on the right, to the vicinity of the White Plains, on the left.

The royal army moved in two columns, and took a po- Oct. 25. fition with the Brunx in front, upon which the Americans affembled their main force at White Plains, behind intrenchments. A general action was hourly expected, and a confiderable one took place, in which feveral hundreds fell. The Americans were commanded by General M'Dou- Oct. 28. gal, and the British by General Leslie. While they were engaged, the American baggage was moved off, in full view of the British army. Soon after this, General Washington changed his front, his left wing stood fast, and his right fell back to some hills. In this position, which was an admirable one in a military point of view, he both defired and expected an action; but General Howe declined it, and drew off his forces towards Dobbs' ferry. The Americans afterwards retired to North-Castle.

General Washington, with part of his army, crossed the North-River, and took post in the neighbourhood of Fort-Lee. A force of about 7500 men was left at

North-Caftle, under General Lee.

The Americans having retired, Sir William Howe Nov. 12 determined to improve the opportunity of their absence, for the reduction of Fort Washington. This, the only post the Americans then held on New-York island, was under the command of Colonel Magaw. The royal army made four attacks upon it. The first on the north fide, was led on by General Kniphausen. The second on the east by General Matthews, supported by Lord Cornwallis. The third was under the direction of Lieutenant- Nov. 16. Colonel Stirling, and the fourth was commanded by Lord Pierey. The troops under Kniphausen, when advancing to the fort, had to pass through a thick wood, which was occupied by Colonel Rawling's regiment of riflemen, and fuffered very much from their well directed fire. During this attack, a body of the British light infantry advanced against a party of the Americans, who were annoying them from behind rocks and trees, and obliged them to disperse. Lord Piercy carried an advance work on his fide, and Lieutenant-Colonel Stirling, forced his way up a steep height, and took 170 prisoners. outworks being carried, the Americans left their lines, and crouded into the fort. Colonel Rahl, who led the right

right column of Kniphausen's attack, pushed forward, and lodged his column within a hundred yards of the for, and was there foon joined by the left column-the garrison furrendered on terms of capitulation, by which the men were to be confidered as prisoners of war, and the officers to keep their baggage and fide arms. The num. ber of prisoners amounted to 2700. The loss of the British, inclusive of killed and wounded, was about 1200, Shortly after Fort Washington had surrendered, Lord Nov. 18. Cornwallis, with a confiderable force paffed over to at-

tack Fort Lee, on the opposite Jersey shore.

The garrifon was faved by an immediate evacuation, but at the expence of their artillery and stores. General Washington, about this time retreated to New-Ark. Having abundant reason from the posture of affairs, to count on the necessity of a farther retreat, he asked Colonel Reed,-" Should we retreat to the back parts of Pennfylvania, will the Pennfylvanians support us?" The Colonel replied, if the lower counties are subdued and give up, the back counties will do the fame. The General replied, we must retire to Augusta county, in Virginia, Numbers will be obliged to repair to us for fafety, and we must try what we can do in carrying on a predatory war, and if overpowered, we must cross the Allegany mountains."

While a tide of fuccefs was flowing in upon General Howe, he and his brother, as royal commissioners, issued a proclamation, in which they commanded " All persons affembled in arms against his Majesty's government to difband, and all general or provincial Congresses to defift from their treasonable actings, and to relinquish their usurped power." They also declared " that every person who within fixty days should appear before the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, or Commander in chief of any of his Majesty's colonies, or before the General or Commanding Officer of his Majesty's forces, and claim the benefit of the proclamation; and testify his obedience to the laws, by subscribing a certain declaration, should obtain a full and free pardon of all treasons by him committed, and of all forfeitures, and penalties for the fame," many who had been in office, and taken an active part in support of the new government, accepted of these offers, and made their peace by fubmission. Some who had been the greatest blusterers, in favour of independence, veered round to the strongest side. Men of fortune generally gave way. The

The few who stood firm, were mostly to be found in

the middle ranks of the people.

The term of time for which the American foldiers had engaged to serve, ended in November or December, with no other exception, than that of two companies of artillery, belonging to the state of New-York, which were engaged for the war. The army had been organised at the close of the preceding year, on the fallacious idea, that an accommodation would take place, within a twelve month. Even the slying camp, though instituted after the prospect of that event had vanished, was enlisted only till the first of December, from a presumption that the

campaign would terminate by that time.

When it was expected that the conquerors would retire to winter quarters, they commenced a new plan of operations, more alarming than all their previous conquests. The reduction of Fort Washington, the evacuation of Fort Lee, and the diminution of the American army, by the departure of those whose time of fervice had expired, encouraged the British, notwithstanding the severity of the winter, and the badness of the roads, to purfue the remaining inconfiderable continental force. with the prospect of annihilating it. By this turn of affairs, the interior country was furprised into confusion, and found an enemy within its bowels, without a fufficient army to oppose it. To retreat, was the only expedient left. This having commenced, Lord Cornwallis followed, and was close in the rear of General Washington, as he retreated successively to New-Ark, to Brunfwick, to Princeton, to Trenton, and to the Pennfylvania fide of the Delaware. The pursuit was urged with fo much rapidity, that the rear of the one army pulling down bridges, was often within fight and shot of the van of the other, building them up.

This retreat into, and through New Jersey, was attended with almost every circumstance that could occasion embarrassment, and depression of spirits. It commenced in a sew days after the Americans had lost 2700 men in Fort Washington. In sourteen days after that event, the whole slying camp claimed their discharge. This was sollowed by the almost daily departure of others, whose engagements terminated nearly about the same time. A farther disappointment happened to General Washington at this time. Gates had been ordered by Congress to send two regiments from Ticonderoga, to

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1776. reinforce his army. Two Jersey regiments were put un. der the command of General St. Clair, and forwarded in obedience to this order, but the period for which they were inlifted was expired, and the moment they entered their own state, they went off to a man. A few officers without a fingle private, were all that General St. Clair brought off of these two regiments, to the aid of the retreat. ing American army. The few who remained with Gene. ral Washington were in a most forlorn condition. They confifted mostly of the troops which had garrisoned Fort Lee, and had been compelled to abandon that post so sud. denly, that they commenced their retreat without tents or blankets, and without any utenfils to drefs their provisions. In this situation they performed a march of about ninety miles, and had the address to prolong it to the space of nineteen days. As the retreating Americans marched through the country, scarcely one of the inhabitants joined them, while numbers were daily flocking to the royal army, to make their peace and obtain protection, They faw on the one fide a numerous well appointed and full clad army, dazzling their eyes with the elegance of uniformity; on the other a few poor fellows, who from their shabby cloathing were called ragamuffins, fleeing for their fafety. Not only the common people changed fide in this gloomy state of public affairs, but some of the leading men in New-Jerfey and Pennfylvania adopted the fame expedient. Among these Mr. Galloway, and the family of the Allens of Philadelphia, were most distinguished.—The former, and one of the latter, had been members of Congress. In this hour of advertity they came within the British lines, and surrendered themselves to the conquerors, alledging in justification of their conduct, that though they had joined with their countrymen in feeking for a redrefs of grievances in a constitutional way, they had never approved of the measures lately adopted, and were in particular, at all times, averle to independence.

On the day General Washington retreated over the Delaware, the British took possession of Rhode-Island without any lofs, and at the fame time blocked up Commodore Hopkins' fquadron, and a number of privateers

at Providence.

In this period, when the American army was relinquishing its General—the people giving up the cause, some of their leaders going over to the enemy, and the British Commanders

Commanders fucceeding in every enterprise, General Lee was taken prisoner at Baskenridge, by Lieutenant-Colonel This caused a depression of spirits among the Americans, far exceeding any real injury done to their effential interests. He had been repeatedly ordered to come forward with his division and join General Washington, but these orders were not obeyed. This circumfrance, and the dangerous crifis of public affairs, together with his being alone at some distance from the troops which he commanded, begat fuspicions that he chose to fall into the hands of the British. Though these apprehensions were without foundation, they produced the same extensive mischief, as if they had been realities. Americans had reposed extravagant confidence in his military talents, and experience of regular European war. Merely to have loft fuch an idol of the states at any time, would have been diffresful, but lofing him under circumflances, which favoured an opinion that, despairing of the American cause, he chose to be taken a prisoner, was to many an extinguishment of every hope.

By the advance of the British into New-Jersey, the neighbourhood of Philadelphia became the feat of war. This prevented that undisturbed attention to public business which the deliberations of Congress required. They therefore adjourned themselves to meet in eight days at Dec. 12, Baltimore, resolving at the same time, " that General Washington should be possessed of full powers to order and direct all things relative to the department, and the

operations of war."

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The activity of the British in the close of the campaign, feemed in some measure to compensate for their tardiness,

in the beginning of it.

Hitherto they had succeeded in every scheme. They marched up and down the Jersey side of the river Delaware, and through the country, without any molestation. All opposition to the re-establishment of royal government, feemed to be on the point of expiring. The Americans had thus far acted without fystem, or rather feebly executed what had been tardily adopted. Though the war was changed from its first ground, a redress of grievances to a struggle for sovereignty, yet some considerable time elapsed, before arrangements, conformable to this new lystem were adopted, and a much longer before they were carried into execution.

With the year 1776, a retreating, half naked army, was

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to be dismissed, and the prospect of a new one was both distant and uncertain. The recently assumed independence of the States, was apparently on the verge of diffoln. tion. It was supposed by many, that the record of their existence would have been no more than that " a fickle people, impatient of the restraints of regular government. had in a fit of passion abolished that of Great-Britain, and established in its room free constitutions of their own, but these new establishments, from want of wisdom in their rulers, or of spirit in their people, were no sooner formed than annihilated. The leading men, in their respective governments, and the principal Members of Congress, (for by this name the infurgents distinguished their supreme council) were hanged, and their estates confiscated, Washington, the gallant leader of their military establishments—worthy of a better fate—deferted by his army -abandoned by his country-rushing on the thickest battalions of the foe, provoked a friendly British bayonet to deliver him from an ignominious death."

To human wisdom it appeared probable, that such a paragraph would have closed some small section in the history of England, treating of the American troubles, but there is in human affairs an ultimate point of elevation or depression, beyond which they neither grow better nor worse, but turn back in a contrary course.

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In proportion as difficulties increased, Congress re-Dec. 10. doubled their exertions to oppose them. They addressed the states in animated language, calculated to remove their despondency—renew their hopes—and confirm their resolutions.

They at the same time dispatched gentlemen of character and influence, to excite the militia to take the field. General Mifflin was, on this occasion, particularly useful. He exerted his great abilities in rousing his fellow-citizens, by animated and affectionate addresses, to turn out in defence of their endangered liberties.

Congress also recommended to each of the United States "to appoint a day of solemn fasting and humiliation, to implore of Almighty God the forgiveness of their many fins, and to beg the countenance and affistance of his providence, in the prosecution of the present just and necessary war."

In the dangerous fituation to which every thing dear to the friends of independence was reduced, Congress transferred transferred extraordinary powers to General Washington, 1776. by a refolution, expressed in the following words:

"The unjust; but determined purpose of the British Court to enflave these free states, obvious through every delusive infinuation to the contrary, having placed things Dec. 27. in fuch a fituation that the very existence of civil liberty now depends on the right execution of military powers, and the vigorous decifive conduct of thefe being impoffible to distant, numerous, and deliberative bodies." This Congress having maturely confidered the present crisis; and having perfect reliance on the wisdom, vigour, and uprightness of General Washington, do hereby,

Refolve, That General Washington shall be, and he is hereby vested with full, ample, and complete powers, to raife and collect together, in the most speedy and effectual manner, from any or all of these United States, fixteen battalions of infantry, in addition to those already voted by Congress; to appoint officers for the said battalions of infantry; to raife, officer, and equip 3000 lighthorse; three regiments of artillery, and a corps of engineers, and to establish their pay; to apply to any of the flates for fuch aid of the militia as he shall judge necesfary; to form such magazines of provisions, and in such places as he shall think proper; to displace and appoint all officers under the rank of Brigadier General, and to fill up all vacancies in every other department in the American armies; to take, wherever he may be, whatever he may want, for the use of the army, if the inhabitants will not fell it, allowing a reasonable price for the same; to arrest and confine persons who refuse to take the continental currency, or are otherwise disaffected to the American cause; and return to the states, of which they are citizens, their names, and the nature of their offences, together with the witnesses to prove them: That the foregoing powers be vested in General Washington, for and during the term of fix months, from the date hereof, unless sooner determined by Congress."

In this hour of extremity, the attention of Congress was employed, in devising plans to fave the states from finking under the heavy calamities which were bearing them down. It is remarkable that, neither in the prefent condition though trying and fevere, nor in any other fince the declaration of independence, was Congress influenced either by force, diftress, artifice or persuafion, to entertain the most distant idea of purchasing peace, by

returning

1776. returning to the condition of British subjects. So low were they reduced in the latter end of 1776, that fome members, distrustful of their ability to refift the power of Great-Britain, proposed to authorise their commissioners at the Court of France (whose appointment shall be here. after explained) to transfer to that country the fame monopoly of their trade, which Great-Britain had hitherto enjoyed. On examination it was found, that conceffions of this kind would destroy the force of many arguments heretofore used in favour of independence, and probably difunite their citizens. It was next proposed to offer a monopoly of certain enumerated articles of produce,-To this the variant interests of the different states were fo directly opposed as to occasion a speedy and decided negative. Some proposed offering to France, a league offensive and defensive, in case the would heartily support American independence; but this was also rejected. more enlightened members of Congress argued, "Though the friendship of small states might be purchased, that of France could not," They alledged that if the would rifque a war with Great-Britain, by openly espousing their cause, it would not be fo much from the prospect of direct advantages, as from a natural defire to leffen the overgrown power of a dangerous rival. It was therefore supposed, that the only inducement, likely to influence France to an interference, was an affurance that the United States were determined to persevere in refusing a return to their former allegiance. Instead of listening to the terms of the royal commissioners, or to any founded on the idea of their resuming the character of British subjects, it was therefore again resolved, to abide by their declared independence, and proffered freedom of trade to every foreign nation, truffing the event to Providence, and rifquing all consequences. Copies of these resolutions were sent to the principal Courts of Europe, and proper persons were appointed to folicit their friendship to the new formed states. These dispatches fell into the hands of the British, and were by them published. This was the very thing wished for by Congress. They well knew, that an apprehension of their making up all differences with Great-Britain was the principal objection to the interference of foreign courts, in what was reprefented to be no more than a domestic quarrel. A refolution adopted in the deepest distress, and the worst of times, that Congress would listen to no terms of re-union with their Parent

Parent State, convinced those, who wished for the dismemberment of the British empire, that it was sound policy to interfere, so far as would prevent the conquest of

the United States.

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These judicious determinations in the cabinet, were accompanied with vigorous exertions in the field. In this crisis of danger 1500 of the Pennsylvania militia, were embodied to re-inforce the continental army. The merchant, the farmer, the tradefman and the labourer, cheerfully relinquished the conveniencies of home, to perform the duties of private foldiers, in the feverity of a winter campaign. Though most of them were accustomed to the habits of a city life, they flept in tents, barns, and fometimes in the open air, during the cold months of December and January, There were, nevertheless, only two instances of sickness, and only one of death in that large body of men in the course of fix weeks. The delay so judiciously contrived on the retreat through Jersey, afforded time for these volunteer reinforcements to join General Washington. The number of troops under his command at that time, fluctuated between two and three thoufand men. To turn round and face a victorious and numerous foe, with this inconfiderable force, was rifquing much; but the urgency of the case required that something should be attempted. The recruiting business for the proposed new continental army was at a stand, while the British were driving the Americans before them. The present regular soldiers could, as a matter of right, in less than a week claim their discharge, and scarce a fingle recruit offered to supply their place. Under these circumstances, the bold resolution was formed of recrosfing into the state of Jersey, and attacking that part of the enemy, which was posted at Trenton.

When the Americans retreated over the Delaware, the boats in the vicinity were removed out of the way of their pursuers,—this arrested their progress: But the British commanders in the security of conquest cantoned their army in Burlington, Bordenton, Trenton, and other towns of New-Jersey, in daily expectation of being enabled to cross into Pennsylvania, by means of ice,

which is generally formed about that time.

Of all events, none feemed to them more improbable, than that their late retreating half-naked enemies, should in this extreme cold feason, face about and commence offensive operations. They included themselves in a degree

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of careless inattention to the possibility of a surprise, which in the vicinity of an enemy, however contemptible, can never be justified. It has been said that Colonel Rahl, the commanding officer in Trenton, being under some apprehension for that frontier post, applied to General Grant for a reinforcement, and that the General returned for answer. "Tell the Colonel, he is very safe, I will undertake to keep the peace in New-Jersey with a corpo-

ral's guard."

In the evening of Christmas day, General Washington, made arrangements for recroffing the Delaware in three divisions; at M. Konkey's ferry, at Trenton ferry, and The troops which were to have at or near Bordenton. croffed at the two last places, were commanded by Generals Ewing and Cadwallader, they made every exertion to get over, but the quantity of ice was fo great, that they could not effect their purpose. The main body which was commanded by General Washington crossed at M. Kon. key's ferry, but the ice in the river retarded their passage fo long, that it was three o'clock in the morning, before the artillery could be got over. On their landing in lerfey, they were formed into two divisions, commanded by Generals Sullivan and Greene, who had under their com. mand, Brigadiers Lord Stirling, Mercer and St. Clair: one of these divisions was ordered to proceed on the lower, or river road, the other on the upper or Pennington road. Colonel Stark, with fome light troops, was also directed to advance near to the river, and possess himself of that part of the town, which is beyond the bridge. The divisions having nearly the same distance to march, were ordered immediately on forcing the out guards, to push directly into Trenton, that they might charge the enemy before they had time to form. Though they marched different roads, yet they arrived at the enemy's advanced post, within three minutes of each other. The out guards of the Hessian troops at Trenton soon fell back, but kept up a constant retreating fire. Their main body being hard pressed by the Americans, who had already got possession of half their artillery, attempted to file off by a road leading towards Princeton, but were checked by a body of troops thrown in their way. Finding they were furrounded, they laid down their arms. The number which fubmitted, was 23 officers, and 886 men. Between 30 and 40 of the Hessians were killed and wounded. Colonel Rahl, was among the former, and feven of his officers among

among the latter, Captain Washington of the Virginia 1777. troops, and five or fix of the Americans were wounded. Two were killed, and two or three were frozen to death. The detachment in Trenton confifted of the regiments of Rahl, Losberg and Kniphausen, amounting in the whole to about 1500 men, and a troop of British light horse. All these were killed or captured, except about 600, who escaped by the road leading to Bordenton.

The British had a strong battalion of light infantry at Princeton, and a force yet remaining near the Delaware, fuperior to the American army. General Washington, therefore in the evening of the fame day, thought it most prudent to recross into Pennsylvania, with his prisoners.

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The effects of this successful enterprize were speedily felt in recruiting the American army. About 1400 regular foldiers whose time of service was on the point of expiring, agreed to ferve fix weeks longer, on a promifed gratuity of ten paper dollars to each. Men of influence were fent to different parts of the country to rouse the mili-The rapine, and impolitic conduct of the British, operated more forcibly on the inhabitants, to expel them from the state, than either patriotism or persuasion to prevent their overrunning it.

The Hessian prisoners taken on the 26th being secured, Dec. 28. General Washington re-crossed the Delaware, and took possession of Trenton. The detachments which had been distributed over New-Jersey, previous to the capture of the Hessians, immediately after that event, assembled at Princeton, and were joined by the army from Brunswick under Lord Cornwallis. From this position they came forward towards Trenton in great force, hoping by a vigorous on- Jan. 2d. fet to repair the injury their cause had sustained by the late defeat. Truly delicate was the fituation of the feeble American army. To retreat was to hazard the city of Philadelphia, and to destroy every ray of hope which had begun to dawn from their late success. To risque an action with a superior force in front, and a river in rear, was dangerous in the extreme. To get round the advanced party of the British, and by pushing forwards to attack in their rear, was deemed preferable to either. The British on their advance from Princeton, about 4 P. M. attacked a body of Americans which were posted with Jan. 2d. four field pieces, a little to the northward of Trenton, and compelled them to retreat. The pursuing British being checked at the bridge over Sanpink creek, which runs

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through that town, by fome field pieces which were posted on the opposite banks of that rivuler, fell back so far as to be out of reach of the cannon, and kindled their fires. The Americans were drawn up on the other fide of the creek, and in that position remained till night, cannonading the enemy and receiving their fire. In this critical hour, two armies on which the fuccess or failure of the American revolution, materially depended, were crouded into the small village of Trenton, and only separated by a creek in many places fordable. The British believing they had all the advantages they could wish for, and that they could use them when they pleased, discontinued all farther operations, and kept themfelves in readiness to make the attack next morning. Sir William Erskine is reported to have advised an immediate attack, or at least to place a strong guard at a bridge over Sanpink creek, which lay in the route the Americans took to Princeton, giving for reason that otherwise, Washington if a good General, would make a move to the left of the royal army, and attack the post at Princeton in the rear. The next morning presented a scene as brilliant on the one fide, as it was unexpected on the other. Soon after it became dark, General Washington ordered all his baggage to be filently removed, and having left guards for the purpose of deception, marched with his whole force, by 2 circuitous route to Princeton. This manœuvre was determined upon in a council of war, from a conviction that it would avoid the appearance of a retreat, and at the same time the hazard of an action in a bad polition, and that it was the most likely way to preserve the city of Philadelphia, from falling into the hands of the British. General Washington also presumed, that from an eagerness to efface the impressions made by the late capture of the Hessians at Trenton, the British commanders had pushed forward their principal force, and that of course the remainder in the tear at Princeton was not more than equal to his own. The event verified this conjecture. The more effectually to difguise the departure of the Americans from Trenton, fire were lighted up in front of their camp. These not only gave an appearance of going to reft, but as flame carnot be feen through, concealed from the British, what was transacting behind them. In this relative position they were a pillar of fire to the one army, and a pillar of a cloud to the other. Providence favoured this movement of the

Americans. The weather had been for fome time fo warm 1777. and moiff, that the ground was foft and the roads fo deep as to be fearcely paffable: but the wind fuddenly changed to the north-west, and the ground in a short time was frozen so hard, that when the Americans took up their line of march, they were no more retarded, than if they had been

upon a folid pavement. General Washington reached Princeton, early in the

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morning, and would have completely surprised the British, had not a party, which was on their way to Trenton, deferied his troops, when they were about two miles distant, and fent back couriers to alarm their unsuspecting fellow foldiers in their rear. These consisted of the 17th, the with, and 55th regiments of British infantry and some of the royal artillery with two field pieces, and three troops of light dragoons. The center of the Americans, confifting of the Philadelphia militia, while on their line of march, was brifkly charged by a party of the British, and gave way in disorder. The moment was critical. Washington pushed forward, and placed himself between his own men and the British, with his horse's head fronting The Americans encouraged by his example and exhortations, made a stand and returned the British fire. The General, though between both parties, was providentially uninjured by either. A party of the British fled into the college and were there attacked with field pieces which were fired into it. The feat of the muses became for some time the scene of action. The party which had taken refuge in the college, after receiving a few difcharges from the American field pieces came out and furrendered themselves prisoners of war. In the course of the engagement, fixty of the British were killed and a greater number wounded, and about 300 of them were taken pri-The rest made their escape, some by pushing on towards Trenton, others by returning towards Brunswick. The Americans loft only a few, but Colonels Haslet and Potter, and Captain Neal of the artillery, were among the flain. General Mercer received three bayonet wounds of which he died in a short time. He was a Scotchman by birth, but from principle and affection had engaged to support the liberties of his adopted country, with a zeal

While they were fighting in Princeton, the British in

equal to that of any of its native fons. In private life he was amiable, and his character as an officer stood high in

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Trenton were under arms, and on the point of making an affault on the evacuated camp of the Americans. With fo much address had the movement to Princeton been conducted, that though from the critical fituation of the two armies, every ear may be supposed to have been open, and every watchfulness to have been employed, yet General Washington moved completely off the ground, with his whole force, stores, baggage and artillery unknown to, and unsuspected by his adversaries. The British in Trenton, were so entirely deceived, that when they heard the report of the artillery at Princeton, though it was in the depth of winter, they supposed it to be thunder.

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That part of the royal army, which having escaped from Princeton, retreated towards New-Brunswick, was pursued for three or sour miles. Another party which had advanced as far as Maidenhead, on their way to Trenton, hearing the frequent discharge of fire arms in their rear, wheeled round and marched to the aid of their companions. The Americans by destroying bridges, retarded these, though close in their rear, so long as to gain time for themselves, to move off in good order, to Pluc-

kemin.

So great was the consternation of the British at these unexpected movements, that they instantly evacuated both Trenton and Princeton, and retreated with their whole force to New-Brunfwick. The American militia collected and forming themselves into parties, waylaid their enemies, and cut them off whenfoever an apportunity presented. In a few days they over-ran the Jerseys. General Maxwell furprifed Elizabeth-town, and took near Newark was abandoned, and the late 100 prifoners. conquerors were forced to leave Woodbridge. The rotal troops were confined to Amboy and Brunswick, which held a water communication with New-York. Thus, in the short space of a month, that part of Jersey, which lis between New-Brunswick and Delaware, was both overrun by the British, and recovered by the Americans. The retreat of the continental army, the timid policy of the Jersey farmers, who chose rather to secure their property by fubmission, than defend it by resistance, made the British believe their work was done, and that little elfe remained, but to reap a harvest of plunder as the reward of their labours. Unrestrained by the terrors of civil law, uncontroled by the severity of discipline, and elated with their success, the foldiers of the royal army, and particularly

ticularly the Hestians, gave full scope to the selfish and ferocious paffions of human nature. A conquered country, and fubmitting inhabitants prefented easy plunder, equal to their unbounded rapacity. Infants, children, old men and women were stripped of their blankets and cloathing. Furniture was burnt or otherwife destroyed. Domestic animals were carried off, and the people robbed of their necessary houshold provisions. The rapes and brutalities committed on women, and even on very young girls, would fnock the ears of modefty, if particularly recited. These violences were perpetrated on inhabitants who had remained in their houses, and received printed protections, figured by order of the Commander in chief. It was in vain, that they produced these protections as a fafeguard. The Heffians could not read them, and the British soldiers thought they were entitled to a share of the booty, equally with their foreign affociates.

Such, in all ages, has been the complection of the bulk of armies, that immediate and fevere punishments are indispensably necessary, to keep them from flagrant enormittes. That discipline, without which an army is a hand of armed plunderers, was, as far as respected the inhabitants, either neglected, or but feebly administered in the royal army. The foldiers, finding they might take with impunity what they pleased, were more strongly urged by avarice, than checked by policy or fear. Had every citizen been fecured in his rights, protected in his property, and paid for his supplies, the consequences might have been fatal to the hopes of those who were attached to independence. What the warm recommendations of Congress, and the ardent supplications of Geneal Washington could not effect, took place of its own accord, in confequence of the plundering and devastations of the royal army.

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The whole country became instantly hostile to the invaders. Sufferers of all parties rose as one man, to revenge their personal injuries. Those, who from age or infirmities, were incapable of bearing arms, kept a strict watch on the movements of the royal army, and from time to time, communicated information to their countrymen in arms. Those who lately declined all military opposition, though called upon by the sacred tie of homour pledged to each other on the declaration of independence, cheerfully embodied, when they found submissions.

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fion to be unavailing for the fecurity of their estates, This was not done originally in confequence of the victories of Trenton and Princeton. In the very moment of these actions, or before the news of them had circulated, fundry individuals unknowing of General Wash. ington's movements, were concerting private infurrections, to revenge themselves on the plunderers. The difpute originated about property, or in other words, about the right of taxation.—From the same source at this time, it received a new and forcible impulse. The farmer, who could not trace the confequences of British taxation, nor of American independence, felt the injuries he fultained from the depredation of licentious troops. The militia of New-Jersey, who had hitherto behaved most Thamefully, from this time forward redeemed their character, and throughout a tedious war, performed fervices with a spirit and discipline in many respects, equal to

that of regular foldiers.

The victories of Trenton and Princeton, feemed to be like a refurrection from the dead, to the defponding friends of independence. A melancholy gloom had in the first 25 days of December overspread the United States; but from the memorable æra of the 26th of same month, their prospects began to brighten. The recruiting service, which for some time had been at a stand, was fuccefsfully renewed, and hopes were foon indulged, that the Commander in chief would be enabled to take the field in the fpring, with a permanent regular force. General Washington retired to Morristown, that he might afford shelter to his suffering army. The American militia had fundry fuccessful skirmishes with detachments of their adversaries. Within four days after the affair at Princeton, between forty and fifty Waldeckers were killed, wounded, or taken at Springfield, by an equal number of the same New-Jersey militia, which but a month before, fuffered the British to over-run their country without opposition. This enterprise was conducted by Colonel Spencer, whose gallantry, on the occasion, was rewarded with the command of a regiment.

During the winter movements, which have been just related, the foldiers of both armies underwent great hardthips, but the Americans suffered by far the greater. Many of them were without shoes, though marching over frozen ground, which so gashed their naked feet,

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that each step was marked with blood. There was scarcely a tent in their whole army. The city of Philadelphia had been twice laid under contribution, to provide them with blankets. Officers had been appointed, to examine every house, and, after leaving a scanty covering for the samily, to bring off the rest, for the use of the troops in the field; but notwithstanding these exertions, the quantity procured was far short of decency, much less of comfort.

The officers and foldiers of the American army were about this time inoculated in their cantonment at Morriftown. As very few of them had ever had the small pox, the inoculation was nearly universal. The diforder had previously spread among them in the natural way, and proved mortal to many: but after inoculation was introduced, though whole regiments were inoculated in a day, there was little or no mortality from the fmall pox, and the diforder was fo flight, that from the beginning to the end of it, there was not a fingle day in which they could not, and if called upon, would not have turned out and fought the British. To induce the inhabitants to accommodate officers and foldiers in their houses, while under the small pox, they and their families were inoculated gratis by the military furgeons. Thus in a short time, the whole army and the inhabitants in and near Morristown were subjected to the small pox, and with very little inconvenience to either.

Three months, which followed the actions of Trenton and Princeton, passed away without any important military enterprise on either side. Major General Putnam was directed to take post at Princeton, and cover the country in the vicinity. He had only a few hundred troops, though he was no more than eighteen miles diftant from the strong garrison of the British at Brunswick. At one period he had fewer men for duty than he had miles of frontier to guard. The fituation of General Washington at Morristown was not more eligible. His force was trifling, when compared with that of the British, but the enemy, and his own countrymen, believed the contrary. Their deception was cherished, and artfully continued by the specious parade of a confiderable army. The American officers took their station in positions of difficult access, and kept up a constant communication with each other. This fecured them from

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they harraffed the foraging parties of the British, and often attacked them with success. Of a variety of these, the two following are selected as most worthy of notice.

Jan. 20. General Dickenson, with four hundred Jersey militia, and fifty of the Pennsylvania rislemen, crossed Millstone-river, near Somerset court-house, and attacked a large foraging party of the British, with so much spirit that they abandoned their convoy, and sled. Nine of them were taken prisoners. Forty waggons, and upwards of one hundred horses, with a considerable booty, fell into the hands of the General. While the British were loading their waggons, a single man began to fire on them from the woods. He was soon joined by more of his neighbours, who could not patiently see their property carried away. After the foragers had been annoyed for some time by these unseen marksmen, they fancied on the appearance of General Dickenson, that they were attacked by a superior force, and began a precipitate slight.

In about a month after the affair of Somerset courthouse, Colonel Nelson, of Brunswick, with a detachment of 150 militia men, surprised and captured at Lawrence's-Neck, a major and fifty-nine privates, of the resuges,

who were in British pay.

Throughout the campaign of 1776, an uncommon degree of fickness raged in the American army. Husbandmen, transferred at once from the conveniencies of domestic life, to the hardships of a field encampment, could not accommodate themselves to the sudden change. The fouthern troops fickened from the want of falt provisions. Linen shirts were too generally worn, in contact with the skin. The falutary influence of flannel, in preventing the diseases of camps, was either unknown or disregarded. The discipline of the army was too feeble to enforce those regulations which experience has proved to be indispensably necessary, for preserving the health of large bodies of men collected together. Cleanliness was also too much neglected. On the 8th of August, the whole American army before New-York, confifted of 17,225 men, but of that number only 10,514 were fit for duty. These numerous sick suffered much, from the want of necessaries. Hurry and consusion added much to their distresses. There was besides a real want of the requifites for their relief. A proper

A proper hospital establishment was beyond the abilities of Congress, especially as the previous arrangements were not entered upon till the campaign had begun. Many, perhaps some thousands in the American army, were fwept off in a few months by fickness. The country every where prefented the melancholy fight of foldiers fuffering poverty and disease, without the aid of medicine or attendance. Those who survived gave such accounts of the fufferings of the fick, as greatly discouraged the recruiting service. A rage for plundering, under the pretence of taking tory property, infected many of the common foldiery, and even fome of the officers. The army had been formed on fuch principles, in some of the states, that commissions were, in several instances, bestowed on persons who had no pretensions to the character of gentlemen. Several of the officers were chosen by their own men, who often preferred those from whom they expected the greatest indulgencies. In other cases, the choice of the men was in favour of those who had consented to throw their pay into a joint stock with the privates, from which officers and men drew equal shares.

The army, consisting mostly of new recruits and unexperienced officers, and being only engaged for a twelvemonth, was very deficient in that mechanism and discipline which time and experience bestow on veteran troops. General Washington was unremitting in his representations to Congress, favouring such alterations as promised permanency, order and discipline in the army, but his judicious opinions on these subjects were slowly adopted. The sentiments of liberty, which then generally prevailed, made some distinguished members of Congress so distrustful of the suture power and probable designs of a permanent domestic army, that they had well nigh sacrificed their country to their inclusions.

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The unbounded freedom of the savage who roams the woods must be restrained when he becomes a citizen of orderly government, and from the necessity of the case must be much more so, when he submits to be a soldier. The individuals composing the army of America, could not at once pass over from the sull enjoyment of civil liberty to the discipline of a camp, nor could the leading men in Congress for some time be persuaded to adopt energetic establishments. "God forbid, would such say, that the citizen should be so far lost in the soldiers of our

army,

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army, that they should give over longing for the enjoy. ments of domestic happiness. Let frequent furloughs be granted, rather than the endearments of wives and children should cease to allure the individuals of our army from camps to farms." The amiableness of this principle, veiled the error of the fentiment. The minds of the civil leaders in the councils of America were daily occupied in contemplating the rights of human nature, and investigating arguments on the principles of general liberty, to justify their own opposition to Great-Britain. Warmed with these ideas, they trusted too much to the virtue of their countrymen, and were backward to enforce that fubordination and order in the army, which, though it intrenches on civil liberty, produces effects in the military line unequalled by the effusions of patriotism, or the exertions of undisciplined valor.

The experience of two campaigns evinced the folly of trusting the defence of the country to militia, or to levies raised only for a few months, and had induced a resolution for recruiting an army for the war. The good effects

of this measure will appear in the sequel.

The campaign of 1776 did not end, till it had been protracted into the first month of the year 1777. The British had counted on the complete and speedy reduction of their late colonies, but they found the work more difficult of execution, than was supposed. They wholly failed in their defigns on the fouthern states. In Canada they recovered what, in the preceding year, they had lost-drove the Americans out of their borders, and destroyed their fleet on the lakes, but they failed in making their intended impression on the northwestern frontier of the states. They obtained possession of Rhode-Island, but the acquifition was of little fervice—perhaps was of detriment. For near three years feveral thousand men stationed thereon for its fecurity, were lost to every purpose of active co-operation with the royal forces in the field, and the possession of it secured no equivalent advantages. The British completely succeeded against the city of New-York, and the adjacent country, but when they pursued their victories into New-Jersey, and subdivided their army, the recoiling Americans foon recovered the greatest part of what they had loft.

Sir William Howe, after having nearly reached Philadelphia, was confined to limits so narrow, that the feesimple simple of all he commanded would not reimburse the ex- 1777.

pence incurred by its conquest.

The war, on the part of the Americans, was but barely begun. Hitherto they had engaged with temporary forces, for a redress of grievances, but towards the close of this year they made arrangements for raising a permanent army to contend with Great-Britain, for the fovereignty of the country. To have thus far stood their ground, with their new levies, was a matter of great importance, because to them, delay was victory, and not to be conquered was to conquer. come as given full trape to a disposition for constituen

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## C H A P. XIII.

Of Independence, State Constitutions, and the Confederation.

Inity to migrate, and erect themselves into an independent society. Since the earth has been more sully peopled, and especially since the principles of Union have been better understood, a different policy has prevailed. A sondness for planting colonies has, for three preceding centuries, given sull scope to a disposition for emigration, and at the same time the emigrants have been retained in a connection with their Parent State. By these means Europeans have made the riches both of the East and West subservient to their avarice and ambition. Though they occupy the smallest portion of the four quarters of the globe, they have contrived to subject the other three to their influence or command.

The circumstances under which New-England was planted, would a few centuries ago have entitled them from their first settlement, to the privileges of independence. They were virtually exiled from their native country, by being denied the rights of men—they set out on their own expence, and after purchasing the consent of the native proprietors, improved an uncultivated country, to which, in the eye of reason and philosophy, the King

of England had no title.

If it is lawful for individuals to relinquish their native foil, and pursue their own happiness in other regions and under other political affociations, the fettlers of New-England were always so far independent, as to owe no obedience to their Parent State, but such as resulted from their voluntary affent. The flavish doctrine of the divine right of Kings and the corruptions of christianity, by undervaluing heathen titles to property in the foil, favoured an opposite system. What for several centuries after the christian æra would have been called the institution of a new government, was by modern refinement denominated only an extension of the old, in the form of a dependent colony. Though the prevailing ecclefiaftical and political creeds tended to degrade the condition of the fettlers in New-England, yet there was always a party there which believed in their natural right to independence.

dence. They recurred to first principles, and argued, that as they received from government nothing more than a charter, founded on ideal claims of fovereignty, they owed it no other obedience than what was derived from express, or implied compact. It was not till the present century had more than half elapsed, that it occurred to any number of the colonists, that they had an interest in being detached from Great-Britain. Their attention was first turned to this subject, by the British claim of taxation. This opened a melancholy prospect, boundless in extent and endless in duration. The Boston port act and the other acts, passed in 1774 and 1775, which have been already the subject of comment, progressively weakened the attachment of the colonists to the birth place of their forefathers. The commencement of hostilities on the 19th of April, 1775, exhibited the Parent State in an odious point of view, and abated the original dread of feparating from it. But nevertheless at that time, and for a twelve month after, a majority of the colonists wished for no more than to be re-established as subjects in their antient rights. Had independence been their object even at the commencement of hostilities, they would have refeinded these affociations, which have been already mentioned and imported goods more largely than ever. Common fense revolts at the idea, that colonists unfurnished with military stores, and wanting manufactures of every kind, should at the time of their intending a ferious struggle for independence, by a voluntary agreement, deprive themselves of the obvious means of procuring such foreign supplies as their circumstances might make necessary. Instead of pursuing a line of conduct, which might have been dictated by a wish for independence, they continued their exports for nearly a year after they ceafed to import. This not only lessened the debts they owed to Great-Britain, but furnished additional means for carrying on the war against themselves. To aim at independence, and at the fame time, to transfer their resources to their enemies, could not have been the policy of an enlightened people. It was not till some time in 1776, that the colonists began to take other ground, and contend that it was for their interest to be for ever separated from Great-Britain. In fayour of this opinion it was faid, that in cafe of their continuing subjects, the mother country, though the redreffed their present grievances, might at pleasure 1777-

repeat similar oppressions;—and that she ought not to be trusted, having twice resumed the exercise of taxation, after it had been apparently relinquished. The favourers of separation also urged, that Great-Britain was jealous of their increasing numbers and rising greatness—that she would not exercise government for their benefit, but for her own. That the only permanent security for American happiness, was to deny her the power of interfering with their government or commerce. To effect this purpose they were of opinion, that it was necessary to cut the knot, which connected the two countries, by a public renunciation of all political connections between them.

The Americans about this time began to be influenced by new views.—The military arrangements of the preceding year—their unexpected union, and prevailing enthusiasm, expanded the minds of their leaders, and elevated the sentiments of the great body of their people. Decisive measures which would have been lately repro-

bated now met with approbation.

The favourers of subordination under the former constitution urged the advantages of a supreme head, to control the disputes of interfering colonies, and also the benefits which slowed from union; and that independence was untried ground, and should not be entered upon,

but in the last extremity.

They flattered themselves that Great-Britain was so fully convinced of the determined spirit of America, that if the prefent controverfy was compromised, she would not at any future period, refume an injurious exercise of her fupremacy. They were therefore for proceeding no farther than to defend themselves in the character of subjects, trusting that ere long the present hostile measures would be relinquished, and the harmony of the two countries re-established. The favourers of this system were embarraffed, and all their arguments weakened, by the perseverance of Great-Britain in her schemes of coercion. A probable hope of a speedy repeal of a few acts of parliament, would have greatly increased the number of those who were advocates for a reconciliation. But the certainty of intelligence to the contrary gave additional force to the arguments of the opposite party. Though new weight was daily thrown into the scale, in which the advantages of independence were weighed, yet it did not preponderate till about that time in 1776, when intelligence reach-

edthe colonists of the act of parliament passed in December 1775, for throwing them out of British protection, and of hiring foreign troops to affift in effecting their conquest. Respecting the first it was faid, " that protection and allegiance were reciprocal, and that the refulal of the first was a legal ground of justification for withholding the laft." They confidered themselves to be thereby difcharged from their allegiance, and that to declare themfelves independent, was no more than to announce to the world the real political flate, in which Great-Britain had placed them. This act proved that the colonists might constitutionally declare themselves independent, but the hiring of foreign troops to make war upon them, demonfirated the necessity of their doing it immediately. They reasoned that if Great-Britain called in the aid of strangers to crush them, they must feek similar relief for their own preservation, But they well knew this could not be expected, while they were in arms against their acknowledged fovereign. They had therefore only a choice of difficulties, and must either seek foreign aid as independent states, or continue in the aukward and hazardous fituation of fubjects, carrying on war from their own resources both against their King, and fuch mercenaries as he chose to employ for their subjugation. Necessity, not choice, forced them on the decision. Submission without obtaining a redress of their grievances was advocated by none who possessed the public confidence. Some of the popular leaders may have fecretly wished for independence from the beginning of the controversy, but their number was small and their fentiments were not generally known.

While the public mind was balancing on this eventful subject, several writers placed the advantages of independence in various points of view. Among these Thomas Paine in a pamphlet, under the signature of Common Sense, held the most distinguished rank. The stile, manner, and language of this performance were calculated to interest the passions, and to rouse all the active powers of human nature. With the view of operating on the sentiments of a religious people, scripture was pressed into his service, and the powers and even the name of a King was rendered odious in the eyes of the numerous colonists who had read and studied the history of the Jews, as recorded in the Old Testament. The folly of that people in revolting from a government, instituted by Heaven itself, and the oppressions to which they were subjected in consequence

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of their lufting after Kings to rule over them, afforded an excellent handle for prepofferfing the colonists in favour of republican institutions, and prejudicing them against Kingly government. Hereditary succession was turned into ridi-The absurdity of subjecting a great continent to a small island on the other side of the globe, was represented in such striking language, as to interest the honor and pride of the colonists in renouncing the government of Great-Britain. The necessity, the advantages and practicability of independence, were forcibly demonstrated. Nothing could be better timed than this performance. It was addreffed to freemen, who had just received convincing proof, that Great-Britain had thrown them out of her protection, had engaged foreign mercenaries to make war upon them, and feriously designed to compel their unconditional submission to her unlimited power. It found the colonists most thoroughly alarmed for their liberties, and disposed to do and fuffer any thing that promised their establishment. In union with the feelings and fentiments of the people, it produced furprising effects. Many thousands were convinced, and were led to approve and long for a separation from the Mother Country. Though that measure, a few months before, was not only foreign from their wishes, but the object of their abhorrence, the current suddenly became fo strong in its favour, that it bore down all opposition. The multitude was hurried down the stream, but some worthy men could not eafily reconcile themselves to the idea of an eternal separation from a country, to which they had been long bound by the most endearing ties. They saw the fword drawn, but could not tell when it would be sheathed. They feared that the dispersed individuals of the feveral colonies would not be brought to coalesce under an efficient government, and that after much anarchy some future Cæsar would grasp their liberties, and confirm himfelf in a throne of despotism. They doubted the perseverance of their countrymen in effecting their independence, and were also apprehensive that in case of success, their suture condition would be less happy than their past. Some respectable individuals whose principles were pure, but whose fouls were not of that firm texture which revolutions require, shrunk back from the bold measures proposed by their more adventurous countrymen. To fubmit without an appeal to Heaven, though fecretly wished for by fome,

some, was not the avowed sentiment of any. But to persevere in petitioning and refisting was the system of some misguided honest men. The favourers of this opinion were generally wanting in that decision which grasps at great objects, and influenced by that timid policy, which does its work by halves. Most of them dreaded the power of Britain. A few, on the score of interest or an expectancy of favours from royal government, refused to concur with the general voice. Some of the natives of the Parent State who, having lately fettled in the colonies, had not yet exchanged European for Amecan ideas, together with a few others, conscientiously opposed the measures of Congress: but the great bulk of the people, and especially of the spirited and independent part of the community, came with furprising unanimity into the project of independence.

The eagerness for independence resulted more from feeling than reasoning. The advantages of an unfettered trade, the prospect of honours and emoluments in administering a new government, were of themselves insufficient motives for adopting this bold measure. But what was wanting from confiderations of this kind, was made up by the perseverance of Great-Britain, in her schemes of coercion and conquest. The determined resolution of the Mother Country to fubdue the colonists, together with the plans she adopted for accomplishing that purpose, and their equally determined resolution to appeal to Heaven rather than fubmit, made a declaration of independence as necessary in 1776, as was the non-importation agreement of 1774, or the affumption of arms in 1775. The last naturally resulted from the first. The revolution was not forced on the people by ambitious leaders grasping at supreme power, but every measure of it was forced on Congress, by the necessity of the case, and the voice of the people. The change of the public mind of America respecting connection with Great-Britain, is without a parallel. In the short space of two years, nearly three millions of people passed over from the love and duty of loyal subjects, to the hatred and and resentment of enemies.

The motion for declaring the colonies free and inde- June 7. pendent, was first made in Congress, by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia. He was warranted in making this motion by the particular instructions of his immediate con-

ffituents, and also by the general voice of the people of all the states. When the time for taking the subject under confideration arrived, much knowledge, ingenuity and eloquence were displayed on both sides of the question. The debates were continued for some time, and with great animation. In these John Adams and John Dickinson, took leading and opposite parts. The former began one of his speeches, by an invocation of the god of eloquence, to affift him in defending the claims and enforcing the duty of his countrymen. He strongly urged the immediate dissolution of all political connection of the colonies with Great-Britain, from the voice of the people, from the necessity of the meafure in order to obtain foreign affistance, from a regard to confiftency, and from the prospects of glory and happiness, which opened beyond the war, to a free and independent Mr. Dickinson replied to this speech. He began by observing that the member from Maffachusetts (Mr. Adams) had introduced his defence of the declaration of independence by invoking an heathen god, but that he should begin his objections to it, by folemnly invoking the Governor of the Universe, so to influence the minds of the members of Congress, that if the proposed measure was for the benefit of America, nothing which he should say against it, might make the least impression. He then urged that the present time was improper for the declaration of independence, that the war might be conducted with equal vigor without it, that it would divide the Americans, and unite the people of Great-Britain against them. He then proposed that fome affurance should be obtained of affistance from a foreign power, before they renounced their connection with Great-Britain, and that the declaration of independence should be the condition to be offered for this affistance. He likewise flated the disputes that existed between several of the colonies, and proposed that some measures for the settlement of them should be determined upon, before they lost fight of that tribunal, which had hitherto been the umpire of all their differences.

After a full discussion, the measure of declaring the colonies free and independent was approved by nearly an unanimous vote. The anniversary of the day on which this great event took place, has ever fince been consecrated by the Americans to religious gratitude, and social pleasures

the particular infractions of the

pleasures. It is considered by them as the birth day of their freedom.

1776.

The act of the united colonies for separating themselves from the government of Great-Britain, and declaring their independence, was expressed in the following words:

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel

them to the feparation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness .- That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on fuch principles, and organizing its power in fuch form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and tranfient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a defign to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off fuch government, and to provide new guards for their future fecurity. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and fuch is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great-Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

1776. He has refused his affent to laws, the most wholesome

and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants

only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has diffolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of

the people.

He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining in the mean-time exposed to all the danger of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refufing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their falaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and fent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the confent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of,

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and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurifdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his affent to their acts of pretended legislation:

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For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:
For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment
for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing taxes on us without our consent:

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury:

For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended

offences :

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies:

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our

governments:

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our feas, ravaged our coasts, burnt

our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to

fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which

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1776. may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free

people.

Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts made by their legislature, to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war,

in peace, friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress affembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown; and that all political connection between them and the state of Great-Britain is and ought to be totally diffolved; and that as free and independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent States may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our facred honour.

JOHN HANCOCK, President.

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New-Hampshire, Josiah Bartlett, William Whipple, Matthew Thornton. Massachusett's-Bay, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert-Treat Paine, Elbridge Gerry. Rhode-Island, &c. Stephen Hopkins, William Ellery. Connecticut, Roger Sherman, Samuel Huntington, William Williams, Oliver Wolcott. New-York, William Floyd, Philip Livingston, Francis Lewis, Lewis Morris, New-Jersey, Richard Stockton, John Witherspoon, Francis Hopkinson, John Hart, Abraham

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ham Clark. Pennfylvania, Robert Morris, Benjamin Rush, Benjamin Franklin, John Morton,
George Clymer, James Smith, George Taylor,
James Wilson, George Ross. Delaware, Cæsar
Rodney, George Read. Maryland, Samuel Chase,
William Paca, Thomas Stone, Charles Carroll,
of Carrollton. Virginia, George Wythe, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jesserson, Benjamin
Harrison, Thomas Nelson, junr. Francis Lightstoot Lee, Carter Braxton. North-Caralina, William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn. SouthGarolina, Edward Rutledge, Thomas Heyward,
jun. Thomas Lynch, jun. Arthur Middleton.
Georgia, Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, George
Walton."

From the promulgation of this declaration, every thing assumed a new form. The Americans no longer appeared in the character of subjects in arms against their sovereign, but as an independent people, repelling the attacks of an invading soc. The propositions and supplications for reconciliation were done away. The dispute was brought to a single point, whether the late British colonies should be conquered provinces, or free and independent States.

The declaration of independence was read publicly in all the States, and was welcomed with many demonstrations of joy. The people were encouraged by it to bear up under the calamities of war, and viewed the evils they luffered, only as the thorn that ever accompanies the rofe. The army received it with particular fatisfaction. As far as it had validity, so far it secured them from suffering as rebels, and held out to their view an object, the attainment of which would be an adequate recompense for the toils and danger of war. They were animated by the confideration that they were no longer to risque their lives for the trifling purpose of procuring a repeal of a tew oppressive acts of Parliament, but for a new organiration of government, that would for ever put it out of the power of Great-Britain to oppress them. The flattering prospects of an extensive commerce freed from British restrictions, and the honours and emoluments of office in independent States now began to glitter before

the eyes of the colonists, and reconciled them to the difficulties of their fituation. What was supposed in Great-

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1776.

Britain to be their primary object, had only a fecondary influence. While they were charged with aiming at independence from the impulse of avarice and ambition, they were ardently wishing for a reconciliation. after they had been compelled to adopt that measure, these powerful principles of human actions opposed its retraction, and stimulated to its support. That sepafation which the colonists at first dreaded as an evil, they foon gloried in as a national bleffing. While the rulers of Great-Britain urged their people to a vigorous profecution of the American war, on the idea that the colonifis were aiming at independence, they imposed on them a necessity of adopting that very measure, and actually effected its accomplishment. By repeatedly charging the Americans with aiming at the erection of a new government, and by proceeding on that idea to subdue them. predictions which were originally false, eventually became true. When the declaration of independence reached Great-Britain, the partizans of ministry triumphed in their fagacity. "The measure, faid they, we have long forefeen, is now come to pass." They inverted the natural order of things. Without reflecting that their own policy had forced a revolution contrary to the original delign of the colonifts, the declaration of independence was held out to the people of Great-Britain as a justification of those previous violences, which were its efficient cause.

The act of Congress for dissevering the Colonies from their Parent State, was the subject of many animadver-

fions.

The colonists were faid to have been precipitate in adopting a measure, from which there was no honourable ground of retreating. They replied that for eleven years they had been incessantly peritioning the throne for a redress of their grievances. Since the year 1765, a continental Congress had at three sundry times stated their claims, and prayed for their constitutional rights. That each Assembly of the thirteen Colonies had also, in its feparate capacity, concurred in the same measure.—That from the perseverance of Great-Britain in her schemes for their coercion, they had no alternative, but a mean submission, or a vigorous resistance; and that as the was about to invade their coasts with a large body of mercenaries, they were compelled to declare themselves independent, that they might be put into an immediate capacity for foliciting foreign aid. The

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The virulence of those who had been in opposition to 1776. the claims of the colonists, was increased by their bold At in breaking off all subordination to the Parent State. "Great-Britain, faid they, has founded colonies at great expence—has incurred a load of debt by wars on their account-has protected their commerce, and railed them to all the confequence they posses, and now in the infolence of adult years, rather than pay their proportion of the common expences of government, they ungratefully renounce all connection with the nurse of their youth, and the protectress of their riper years." The Americans acknowledged that much was due to Great-Britain, for the protection which her navy procured to the coasts, and the commerce of the colonies, but contended that much was paid by the latter, in confequence of the restrictions imposed on their commerce by the former, "The charge of ingratitude would have been just," faid they, " had allegiance been renounced while protection was given, but when the navy, which formerly fecured the commerce and lea-port towns of America, began to diffress the former, and to burn the latter, the previous obligations to obey or be grateful, were no longer in force."

That the colonists paid nothing, and would not pay to the support of government, was confidently afferted, and no credit was given for the fums indirectly levied upon them, in confequence of their being confined to the consumption of British manufactures. By such ill-sounded observations were the people of Great-Britain inflamed against their fellow-subjects in America. The latter were represented as an ungrateful people, refusing to bear any part of the expences of a protecting government, or to pay their proportion of a heavy debt, faid to be incurred on their account. Many of the inhabitants of Great-Britain deceived in matters of fact, confidered their American brethren as deferving the severity of military coercion. So strongly were the two countries rivetted together, that if the whole truth had been known to the people of both, their separation would have been scarcely possible. Any feasible plan by which subjection to Great-Britain could have been reconciled with American fafety, would at any time, previous to 1776, have met the approbation of the colonists. But while the lust of power and of gain blinded the rulers of Great-Britain, mistated facts and uncandid representations brought over their people to second the infatuation. A few honeft

nest men properly authorised, might have devised meafures of compromile, which under the influence of truth. humility and moderation, would have prevented a dic memberment of the empire; but these virtues ceased to influence, and falsehood, haughtiness and blind zeal usurped their places. Had Great-Britain, even after the declaration of independence, adopted the magnanimous refolution of declaring her colonies free and independent States, interest would have prompted them to form such a connection as would have fecured to the Mother Country the advantages of their commerce, without the expence or trouble of their governments. But milguided politics continued the fatal system of coercion and conquest. Several on both fides of the Atlantie, have called the deelaration of independence, " a bold, and accidentally, a lucky speculation," but subsequent events proved, that it was a wife measure. It is acknowledged, that it detached some timid friends from supporting the Americans in their opposition to Great-Britain, but it increased the vigour and union of those, who possessed more fortitude and perfeverance. Without it, the colonists would have had no object adequate to the dangers to which they exposed themselves in continuing to contend with Great-Britain. If the interference of France was necessary to give success to the relistance of the Americans, the declaration of independence was also necessary, for the French expressly founded the propriety of their treaty with Congress on the circumstance, " that they found the United States in polfession of independence."

All political connection between Great-Britain and her colonies being diffolved, the institution of new forms of government became unavoidable. The necessity of this was May 15. so urgent, that Congress, before the declaration of independence, had recommended to the respective Assemblies and Conventions of the United States, to adopt fuch governments as should, in their opinion, best conduce to the happiness and fafety of their constituents. During more than twelve months the colonists had been held together by the force of ancient habits, and by laws under the fimple stile of recommendations. The impropriety of proceeding in courts of justice by the authority of a fovereign, against whom the colonies were in arms, was felf evident. The impossibility of governing, for any length of time, three millions of people, by the ties of honour, without the authority of law, was equally apparent. The rejection of British fovereignty

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levereighty therefore drow after it the necessity of fixing on fome other principle of government. The genius of the Americans, their nepublican habits and fentiments neurally led them to substitute the majesty of the people, in lieu of difearded rayalty. The kingly office was dropped. but in most of the subordinate departments of government, anient forms and names were retained. Such a portion of power had at all times been exercised by the people and their reprefentatives, that the change of fovereignty was hardly perceptible, and the revolution took place without violence or convultion. Popular elections elevated private citizens to the fame offices, which formerly had been conferred by royal appointment. people felt an uninterrunted continuation of the bleffings of law and government under old names, though derived from a new lovereignty, and were fearcely fenfible of any change in their political constitution. The checks and balances which reftrained the popular affemblies under the royal government, were partly dropped, and partly retained, by fubflituting foracthing of the fame kind. The temper of the people would not permit that any one many however exalted by office, or diffinguished by abilities, should have a negative on the declared fense of a majority of their representatives, but the experience of all ages had taught them the danger of lodging all power in one body of men. A fecond branch of legislature, confifting of a few select persons, under the name of senate on council, was therefore conflituted in eleven of the thirteen States, and their concurrence made necessary to give the validity of law to the acts of a more numerous branch of popular representatives. New-York and Massachufetts went one step farther. The former constituted a council of revision, confishing of the Governor and the heads of judicial departments, on whole objecting to any proposed law, a reconsideration became necessary, and unless it was confirmed by two thirds of both houses, it could have no operation. A fimilar power was given to the Governor of Maffachusetts. Georgia and Pennsylvania were the only states whose legislature consisted of only one branch. Though many in these states, and a majority in all the others, faw and acknowledged the propriety of a compounded legislature, yet the mode of creating two branches out of a homogeneous mass of people, was a matter of difficulty. No diffinction of ranks existed in the colonies, and none were entitled to any rights, but fuch

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fuch as were common to all. Some poffeffed more wealth than others, but riches and ability were not always affor ciated. Ten of the eleven states, whose legislatures confift. ed of two branches, ordained that the members of both should be elected by the people. This rather made two co-ordinate houses of representatives than a check on a fingle one, by the moderation of a felect few. Maryland adopted a fingular plan for conflituting an independent fenate. By her constitution the members of that body were elected for five years, while the members of the house of delegates held their seats only for one. The number of fenators was only fifteen, and they were all elected indifcriminately from the inhabitants of any part of the flate, excepting that nine of them were to be refidents on the west, and fix on the east fide of the Chefapeak Bay. They were elected not immediately by the people, but by electors, two from each county, appointed by the inhabitants for that fole purpose. By these regulations the senate of Maryland confifted of men of influence, integrity and abilities, and fuch as were a real and beneficial check on the hafty proceedings of a more numerous branch of popular representatives, The laws of that state were well digested, and its interest fleadily purfued with a peculiar unity of fystem; while elsewhere it too often happened in the fluctuation of public affemblies, and where the legislative department was not sufficiently checked, that paffion and party predominated over principle and public good.

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Pennsylvania instead of a legislative council or senate, adopted the expedient of publishing bills after the second reading, for the information of the inhabitants. This had its advantages and disadvantages. It prevented the precipitate adoption of new regulations, and gave an opportunity of ascertaining the sense of the people on those laws by which they were to be bound; but it carried the spirit of discussion into every corner, and disturbed the peace and harmony of neighbourhoods. By making the business of government the duty of every man, it drew off the attention of many from the steady pursuit of their respective bu-

fineffes.

The state of Pennsylvania also adopted another constitution peculiar to itself, under the denomination of a council of censors. These were to be chosen once every seven years, and were authorised to enquire whether the constitution had been preserved—whether the legislative and executive

recutive branch of government, had performed their duty, of affirmed to themselves, or exercised other or greater mwers, than those to which they were constitutionally enided. To enquire whether the public taxes had been justwhat manner the public monies had been disposed of, and whether the laws had been duly executed. However excellent this inflitution may appear in theory, it is doubtful whether in practice it will answer any valuable end. It most certainly opens a door for difcord, and furnishes abundant matter for periodical altercation, Either from the disposition of its inhabitants. is form of government, or fome other cause, the people of Pennsylvania have constantly been in a state of fermentations The end of one public controversy, has been the beginning of another. From the collision of parties, the minds of the titizens were sharpened, and their active powers improved, but internal harmony has been unknown. They who were out of place, for narrowly watched those who were in, that nothing injurious to the public could be easily effected, but from the Auctuation of power, and the total want of permanent fystem, nothing great or lasting could with fafety be undertaken, or prosecuted to effect. Under all these diadvantages, the state sourished, and from the industry andingenuity of its inhabitants acquired an unrivalled afcendency in arts and manufactures. This must in a great meafure be ascribed to the influence of habits, of order and industry, that had long prevailed.

The Americans agreed in appointing a supreme executive head to each state, with the title either of governor or They also agreed in deriving the whole powers president. of government, either mediately or immediately from the people. In the eastern states, and in New-York, their governors were elected by the inhabitants, in their respective towns or counties, and in the other states by the legillatures: but in no case was the smallest tittle of power exercised from hereditary right. New-York was the only fate which invested its Governor with executive authority without a council. Such was the extreme jealoufy of power which pervaded the American states, that they did not think proper to trust the man of their choice with the power of executing their own determinations, without obliging him in many cases to take the advice of such counsellors as they thought proper to nominate. The disadvantages of this in-

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flication far out-weighed its advantages. Had the governors succeeded by hereditary right, a council would have been often necessary to supply the real want of abilities, but when an individual had been selected by the people as the sitteest person for discharging the duties of this high department, to setter him with a council was either to lessen his capacity for doing good, or to furnish him with a streen for doing evil. It destroyed the secrecy, vigor and dispatch, which the executive power ought to possess, and by making governmental acts the acts of a body, diminished individual responsibility. In some states it greatly enhanced the expenses of government, and in all retarded its operations,

without any equivalent advantages.

New-York in another particular displayed political fagacity superior to her neighbours. This was in her council of appointment, confitting of one fenator from each of her four great election districts, authorised to defignate proper persons for filling vacancies in the executive departments of government. Large bodies are far from being the mest proper depositories of the power of appointing to offices. The affiduous attention of candidates is too apt to bias the voice of individuals in popular affemblies. Befides in feet appointments, the responsibility for the conduct of the officer, is in a great measure annihilated. The concurrence of a select few on the nomination of one, feems a more eligible mode for fecuring a proper choice, than appointments made either by one, or by a numerous body. In the former case there would be danger of favouritism, in the latter a modest unaffuming merit would be overlooked, in favour of the forward and obsequious.

A rotation of public officers made a part of most of the American constitutions. Frequent elections were required by all, but several proceeded still farther, and deprived the electors of the power of continuing the same office in the same hands, after a specified length of time. Young politicians suddenly called from the ordinary walks of life, to make laws and institute forms of government, turned their attention to the histories of ancient republies and the writings of speculative men on the subject of government. This led them into many errors and occasioned them to adopt sundry opinions, unsuitable to the state of society in America,

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and contrary to the genius of real republicanism.

The principle of rotation was carried fo far, that in fome of the states, public officers in several departments fearcely knew their official duty, till they were obliged to retire and give place to others, as ignorant as they had been on their first appointment. If offices had been instituted for the benefit of the holders, the policy of diffusing thele benefits would have been proper, but inflituted as they were for the convenience of the public, the end was marred by fuch frequent changes. By confining the objects of choice, it diminished the privileges of electors, and frequently deprived them of the liberty of choofing the man who, from previous experience, was of all men the most The favourers of this lystem of rotation contended for it, as likely to prevent a perpetuity of office and power in the fame individual or family, and as a fecurity against hereditary honours. To this it was replied, that free, fair and frequent elections were the most natural and proper securities, for the liberties of the people. It produced a more general diffusion of political knowledge, but made more smatterers than adepts in the science of government.

As a farther fecurity for the continuance of republican principles in the American conflitutions, they agreed in prohibiting all hereditary honours and diffinction of ranks.

It was one of the peculiarities of these new forms of government, that all religious establishments were abolished. Some retained a conflictutional diffinction between christians and others, with respect to eligibility to office, but the idea of supporting one denomination at the expence of others, or of raising any one sect of protestants to a legal pre-eminence, was univerfally reprobated. The alliance between church and state was completely broken, and each was left to support itself, independent of the other.

The far famed focial compact between the people and their rulers, did not apply to the United States. The fovereignty was in the people. In their fovereign capacity by their representatives, they agreed on forms of government for their own security, and deputed certain individuals as their agents to ferve them in public flations agreeably to conflitutions, which they prescribed for their

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The world has not hitherto exhibited fo fair an opportunity for promoting focial happiness. It is hoped for the

honor of human nature, that the refult will prove the fallacy of those theories, which suppose that mankind are incapable of felf government. The ancients, not know. ing the doctrine of representation, were apt in their public meetings to run into confusion, but in America this mode of taking the fense of the people, is so well understood, and so completely reduced to system, that its most populous flates are often peaceably convened in an affembly of deputies, not too large for orderly deliberation, and yet repre-fenting the whole in equal proportions. These popular branches of legislature are miniature pictures of the community, and from the mode of their election are likely to be influenced by the same interests and feelings with the people whom they represent. As a farther security for their fidelity, they are bound by every law they make for their The affemblage of these circumstances gives constituents. as great a fecurity that laws will be made, and government administered for the good of the people, as can be expected

from the imperfection of human institutions.

In this short view of the formation and establishment of the American constitutions, we behold our species in a new fituation. In no age before, and in no other country, did man ever possess an election of the kind of government under which he would choose to live. The conflituent parts of the ancient free governments were thrown toge-ther by accident, The freedom of modern European governments was, for the most part, obtained by the concesfions, or liberality of monarchs, or military leaders. In America alone, reason and liberty concurred in the formation of constitutions. It is true, from the infancy of political knowledge in the United States, there were many defects in their forms of government. But in one thing they were all perfect. They left in the people the power of altering and amending them, whenever they pleafed. In this happy peculiarity they placed the science of politics on a footing with the other sciences, by opening it to improvements from experience, and the discoveries of future ages. By means of this power of amending American conflitutions, the friends of mankind have fondly hoped that oppresfion will one day be no more, and that political evil will at least be prevented or restrained with as much certainty, by a proper combination or separation of power, as natural evil

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ledge or ingenuity of man to domestic purposes. No part of the history of antient or modern Europe, can furnish a single fact that militates against this opinion, since in none of its governments have the principles of equal representation and checks been applied, for the preservation of freedom. On these two pivots are suspended the liberties of most of the states. Where they are wanting, there can be no security for liberty, where they exist

they render any farther fecurity unnecessary.

The rejection of British sovereignty not only involved a necessity of erecting independent constitutions, but of cementing the whole United States by fome common bond of union. The act of independence did not hold out to the world thirteen fovereign states, but a common fovereignty of the whole in their united capacity. It therefore became necessary to run the line of distinction, between the local legislatures, and the affembly of the states in Congress. A committee was appointed for digesting articles of confederation between the states or united colonies, as they were then called, at the time the propriety of declaring independence was under debate, and some weeks previously to the adoption of that meafure, but the plan was not for fixteen months after fo far digested, as to be ready for communication to the states. Nor was it finally ratified by the accession of all the states, till nearly three years more had elapsed. In discussing its articles, many difficult questions occurred. One was to ascertain the ratio of contributions from each state. Two principles prefented themselves, numbers of people, and the value of lands. The last was preferred as being the truest barometer of the wealth of nations, but from an apprehended impracticability of carrying it into effect, it was foon relinquished, and recurrence had to the former. That the states should be represented in proportion to their importance, was contended for by those who had extensive territory, but they who were confined to small dimensions, replied, that the states confederated as individuals, in a state of nature, and should therefore have equal votes. From fear of weakening their exertions against the common enemy, the large states for the prefent yielded the point, and confented that each state should have an equal fuffrage.

It was not easy to define the power of the state legis-

1776. tures, fo as to prevent a clashing between their jurisdie. tion, and that of the general government. On mature deliberation it was thought proper, that the former should be abridged of the power of forming any other confede. ration or alliance of laying on any imports or duties that might interfere with treaties made by Congress or keeping up any veffels of war, or granting letters of marque and reprifal. The powers of Congress were also defined. Of these the principal were as follows: To have the fole and exclusive right of determining on peace and war-of fending and receiving ambaffadors-of entering into treaties and alliances of granting letters of marque and reprifal in times of peace. To be the last refort on appeal, in all disputes between two or more flates-to have the fole and exclusive right of regulating the alloy and value of coin, of fixing the standard of weights and measures-regulating the trade and managing all affairs with the Indians-establishing and regulating post-offices-to borrow money or emit bills on the credit of the United States-to build and equip a navy -to agree upon the number of land forces, and to make requifitions from each state for its quota of men, in proportion to the number of its white inhabitants.

No coercive power was given to the general government, nor was it invested with any legislative power over individuals, but only over states in their corporate capacity. As at the time the articles of confederation were proposed for ratification, the Americans had little or no regular commercial intercourse with foreign nations, a power to regulate trade or to raife a revenue from it, though both were effential to the welfare of the union, made no part of the feederal fystem. To remedy this and all other defects, a door was left open for introducing farther provisions, fuited to future circumstances.

The articles of confederation were proposed at a time when the citizens of America were young in the science of politics, and when a commanding fense of duty enforced by the preffure of a common danger, precluded the necessity of a power of compulsion. The enthusiasm of the day gave fuch credit and currency to paper emissions, as made the raising of supplies an easy matter. The fystem of fœderal government was therefore more calculated for what men then were, under these circumstances, than for the languid years of peace, when selfishness

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